ARPASIA;

OR, THE

WANDERER.

A

NOVEL.

By the AUTHOR of the NABOB.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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ARPASIA;

OR, THE

WANDERER.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Leiſure Hours Amuſement.

AS ſoon as the birth-day was over, where Lady Derville had figured with great *eclat*, by appearing in an elegant trimming of Arpaſia's making, the family removed to Sunbury, at which place Lord Derville had a charming villa.

To ſoften the horrors of the country, as Charlotte ſaid, ſhe gave invitations to every body to come and take up their

abode with them; ſo that generally the houſe was pretty well filled. Sir James Hawley was a conſtant viſitor; and, notwithſtanding he was no favourite with Lord Derville, the gallant Colonel Howitzer made one of the party frequently. They had a variety of entertainment, and among the reſt *Readings*, which at this time became very faſhionable, and which Lord Derville's voice and judicious taſte qualified him particularly for; and to increaſe the amuſement, ſometimes two or three would take diſtinct parts of plays. This amuſement gave the hint of acting plays. Charlotte, who foreſaw from ſuch a ſcheme that more company and diſſipation would be introduced, was eager to put it in execution. Her huſband, who was ever ready to indulge her fancies, and comply with her humour, fixed on a part of the houſe, which, with ſome little alteration, would do extremely well for a theatre.

WHILE theſe preparations were making, they were to fix on their ſubjects and adapt the parts. Charlotte was all alive on the occaſion. She would be miſtreſs of the revels, would name the plays and

and caſt the characters. And in the latter inſtance ſhe did not ſhew a total want of ſkill.

One of the plays was to be the Clandeſtine Marriage. In which ſhe aſſigned the part of Lord Ogleby to the Earl of Carberry, Mrs. Heidelberg to Lady Anne Travers, Sterling to Mr. Travers, Arpaſia was to perform Fanny; herſelf, Miſs Sterling; Lord Derville, Lovewell; Sir John Melvil by Sir James Hawley; Bruſh, Colonel Howitzer, &c. Many others were likewiſe ſettled, and all agreed to get their parts with expedition. They had gone through two or three rehearſals of different plays, and Charlotte waited with the utmoſt impatience for the completion of the theatre, and the opening their ſummer campaign.

It is a common obſervation, that few perſons know themſelves. Pope ſays,

"The proper ſtudy of mankind is man;"

but the advice of the ancient philoſopher of "know thyſelf," is a better, becauſe more uſeful leſſon. The Earl of Carberry accepted the character of Lord Ogleby, without feeling the ſatire contained in it, or ſeeing that the picture of

the old rake was drawn for him, or thinking that it was his own counterpart. Lord Derville could certainly make no objection to the part allotted him, nor did Arpaſia feel diſtreſſed on the occaſion. She looked on his lordſhip in the light of an affectionate brother, whom ſhe might love without danger; and regarding him as a married man, ſaw leſs impropriety in the arrangement, than if ſhe had been given as companion to Sir James Hawley, who felt himſelf mortified at performing the part of a rejected lover, which his natural timidity and modeſty gave him ſometimes the painful apprehenſion of being in reality.

The rehearſals, by agreement, were always to be public; and the ſeveral performers were got very forward in their parts. The day was fixed for repreſentation, and numerous invitations given to the environs to partake of the amuſement. The preceding evening they were to have their laſt rehearſal, with the practiſing the ſcenes, &c. Charlotte was in high ſpirits, and the whole party retired to reſt, eager for the next day, which was to give them ſo much credit.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVII.

A Conflagration.

BETWEEN two and three o'clock in the morning, Lord Derville was awakened by a violent ſmell of burning. He roſe inſtantly, and throwing on his cloaths, haſtily went out of his chamber—the ſmell increaſed very much.—He returned to awaken his lady, being certain ſome part of the houſe muſt be in flames. The idea of danger, and Arpaſia, were too powerful incentives to be reſiſted, and too much cauſe had he for apprehenſion; for on opening a window, he ſaw the flames iſſuing from the New Theatre, over which was the apartment allotted to the uſe of our heroine, and adjoining to which was the nurſery. Regardleſs now of any thing but the ſafety of thoſe ſo dear to him, he left to Charlotte the taſk of alarming the houſe; indeed there was none in equal danger with them, even if he could have beſtowed a thought of any other. He flew to the chamber door of Arpaſia, which he found faſt—He hoped to gain a paſ-

ſage through the child's room, which he knew communicated to it, and was the reaſon ſhe had fixed on her chamber in that wing. He called to the nurſe, who was faſt aſleep, and ſnatching up the infant, ran with it into Arpaſia's room. She, unconſcious of danger, was in a peaceful ſlumber, with a countenance, that either ſleeping or awake, "ſhot "forth peculiar graces." For an inſtant he ſtood gazing on her—A tremor, he had never felt before, pervaded his whole frame—His breath grew ſhort—and he had almoſt forgot the purpoſe for which he entered her room—Juſt in time, however, he collected his wild and ſcattered thoughts—He gently ſighed out her name—ſhe opened her lovely eyes—but ſeeing a man ſtanding by her bed-ſide, ſhe ſhrieked out and ſunk beneath the cloaths—He threw himſelf on his knees, and held out his little Auguſta towards her—"My deareſt Miſs Hanbury," ſaid he—"do you not know me?—ſee here "is my child—be not too much alarm-"ed, but for heaven's ſake riſe inſtant-"ly—you have not a minute to loſe; "part of the houſe is already conſum-

"ed—

" ed—I will retire to the next room—
" but do not, deareſt creature, do not
" loſe a moment."—He ran out of the chamber, and poor Arpaſia, hardly recovered from the idea of houſe-breakers, roſe with precipitation and began dreſſing herſelf, but from terror made twenty miſtakes—Lord Derville every inſtant calling to her to make haſte—Happily for her, ſhe eſpied her great coat hanging on a chair; ſhe threw it round her, and belting it cloſe, moved with quickneſs towards the nurſery, where her protector was waiting with impatience to convey her to a place of ſafety—She was going to make her acknowledgements as ſhe entered—He prevented her, by claſping her in his arms, and pouring out thankſgivings to Heaven that he had been the means of preſerving her—He took her arm under his, and with his little girl in the other, ran down ſtairs—The whole family were now moving, and had actually got into the out-houſes.—There they congratulated each other on their providential eſcape; and when Lord Derville had depoſited his beloved Arpaſia, and dear little infant ſafely with

Charlotte; he with the reſt of the gentlemen, and men ſervants, returned to the houſe, to endeavour to preſerve ſome of the valuables.—They had the prudence to ring a great bell, which drew ſome aſſiſtance to them; but their total ignorance of conducting theſe matters in the country, rendered them of ſmall uſe, and very little of the building could be ſaved—ſome of the furniture was got out; with pictures, and moſt of the wearing apparel. Indeed, as Lord Derville had ſecured his treaſure, he looked on the conflagration with as much philoſophy, though not hardneſs of heart, as Nero did, when all Rome was burning—And Charlotte, whoſe inſenſibility ſtood with her, as it does with too many in the place of philoſophy and reſignation to divine diſpenſations, extracted mirth from their calamity—She laughed heartily at the groteſque figures they made—and to indifferent perſons they certainly might have been objects of mirth, to ſee their pale faces; for the fright and horror of the ſcene was not yet over—not half dreſſed and the aſſortment but ill—for ſome had no ſtock-

ings

ings—one had a ſlipper on one foot, and a ſhoe on the other—Another had two gowns on, without a petticoat. Arpaſia was beſt off, as her great-coat concealed the inaccuracies of her toilet; but ſhe felt not in herſelf a diſpoſition for mirth. Her heart was heavy, though thankful, and ſhe thought their preſervation called for different ſenſations. She ſat upon the footſtep of one of the carriages, preſſing her darling Auguſta to her boſom, and bending over her little charge, which ſhe had received from the hands of its father; while her pious heart was lifted up to heaven in thankſgiving; a tear ſtole gently down her beauteous cheek, and dropped on the face of the ſmiling-babe. At that inſtant of time, Lord Derville was gazing on her, unperceived by any one. He glided up to her, and kneeling down, as if to ſpeak to the child, kiſſed off the precious tear that lay ſparkling on its little forehead—"My "amiable friend," ſaid he, in the ſofteſt tone, to Arpaſia, "you are not well: "The ſhock has been too much for your "gentle and ſenſible heart—Will you

"again

" again put yourſelf under my protec-
" tion?—I will lead you into the air."

" You are very good," ſhe anſwered—
" and I hardly know what language to
" uſe, as you prohibit my expreſſing my
" obligations to you—I will accept your
" offer, for I find ſuch an oppreſſion
" here," putting her hand on her breaſt,
" that I even breathe with difficulty"—He loſt not a moment in getting her out, he led her to a part of the garden where was a ſeat, and placing her there endeavoured to procure her ſome drops—but that was out of his power; he returned with a glaſs of water, which was of ſervice to her—But nature had done more for her, for ſhe burſt into a violent flood of tears, as ſoon as he parted from her.—Diſtracted with the ſight, Lord Derville threw himſelf on his knees before her; ſhe knowing ſhe ſhould be better after this indulgence, waved her hand to urge him to leave her—He did ſo, more from not being able to conceal his emotions, than from a motive of obedience—In a little time ſhe grew compoſed enough to join him; who was walking in the utmoſt agitation backwards and forwards, and apologized

apologized for the weakneſs ſhe had been forced to give way to—which ſhe aſſured him had quite removed her indiſpoſition—The *trio* then, for Auguſta had been of the party, returned to the reſt of the motley groupe, who were making preparations for breakfaſt—at which Arpaſia, now in better ſpirits, aſſiſted. The making this meal was attended with ſome difficulty, though they had received ſome aſſiſtance from their neighbours, who humanely offered every thing in their power.

And here ended, even before the commencement, the theatrical campaign of this corps of gentlemen performers—for as ſoon as they could arrange matters, they got into their carriages and ſet off for London.

The providential eſcape of Arpaſia, through the timely aſſiſtance of Lord Derville, for a few minutes after ſhe had quitted her room, it was incompaſſed in flames, filled her ſoul with grateful thankſgivings to Heaven, and certainly inſpired in her boſom feelings of the moſt tender nature for her preſerver—On compariſon between him and any other individual

individual in the world, ſhe found he was the deareſt thing on earth—The intereſt he had taken in her welfare—The ardour with which he had preſſed her to his boſom—his agitation at ſeeing her tears, all endeared him to her, and gave riſe to ſentiments, or rather awakened them which ſhe knew not ſhe poſſeſſed.—She had received great attention and aſſiduity from Sir James Hawley, nay, it is not to be doubted he would have done as much for her as the other.—She found herſelf obliged for what he had done—but oh! how different did ſhe feel, though her expreſſions were equally polite in returning her acknowledgements—ſhe was collected—ſhe had words at command—ſhe felt no ſuffocation—no tear flowed. He was charmed ten thouſand times more with her, for her even thinking herſelf obliged to him—undeſignedly ſhe rivetted his fetters ſtill more cloſe, and unfortunately too for him, he from that moment ſuffered deceitful hope to raiſe its throne in his boſom.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

A Trip to Brighton.

THE damage done to the buildings of Sunbury, rendered all poſſibility of returning to it that ſummer obvious to them—Charlotte did not feel much mortification from the circumſtance of being obliged to go elſewhere; as variety always carried with it the idea of pleaſure. It is ſaid, but unjuſtly I believe, that great bodies move ſlow—However, great people move quick, as there are ſo many little people in the world, born for no other purpoſe, no doubt, than to take all trouble off their hands—By the aid then of theſe neceſſary auxiliaries and appendages to grandeur, the family of the Dervilles were able to ſet off for Brighton in about a week from the fatal termination of their theatrical manœuvres.

THE day before they left London, Lord Derville came into the room where Arpaſia was ſitting with a book in her hand—He begged pardon for intruding on her, but he had ſomething of importance to communicate to her. The

equality

equality of her temper could not have felt any alarm from his preſence, had ſhe not caſt her eyes on him while he was ſpeaking, and ſaw a viſible alteration in his features—Her heart fluttered, and, with a tremulous voice, ſhe requeſted him to inform her what had occaſioned the perturbation his looks expreſſed. He then collected himſelf, and aſſuming a gayer air, laughed at the accidental gravity of his countenance; though to a diſcerning eye it ſtill remained under the forced ſmile.—In a rather round about manner, he then gave her to underſtand he had been commiſſioned by his friend, Sir James Hawley, to endeavour to learn the real ſtate of her heart and her ſentiments for him—freely owning that ſhe alone had the power of diſpenſing happineſs or miſery, by her acceptance or rejection. "All this," ſaid he, "I meant to have ſpared my-
"ſelf—I meant to have ſaved you the
"trouble of hearing, by writing you a
"letter on the ſubject—I began more
"than one, but could not pleaſe my-
"ſelf; however I have acted the part my
"friend Hawley requeſted of me, tho'
"I told

"I told him I ſhould make but a poor "proxy—I have a great regard for him; "could I have given a ſtronger proof of "it, than in becoming his advocate with "a woman, who in my opinion no man "can deſerve?"

THIS compliment brought up a ſweet bluſh in the cheeks of Arpaſia—ſhe bowed, but ſpake not a word. He moſt honourably pronounced his friend's eulogium, and ſo far, no doubt, did his ſuit ſome ſervice; as his influence certainly was great in the boſom of Arpaſia. Lord Derville ſaid, Sir James had requeſted his opening the buſineſs, as he knew the good opinion which ſhe entertained of his lordſhip—"But does he "not over-rate my happineſs?" he aſked, with a look of tender diſquietude.

"IF any part of it is built on my good "opinion, my lord," Arpaſia replied, "he certainly does not; and I am much "better pleaſed that you ſhould have "undertaken this taſk, as it is much "eaſier in theſe affairs to ſpeak to prox-"ies than to principals—to my Lord "Derville, who has given me leave to "look up to him as a kind brother, I

"can

" can have no reſerve—He will diſcri-
" minate between eſteem, and that ſort
" of preference which I think ſo neceſ-
" ſary to the happineſs of the married
" ſtate—The very ſingle circumſtance of
" being your friend would inſure the
" *firſt* ſentiment to Sir James Hawley;
" but I muſt feel the *latter* in a very high
" degree, before I can bring myſelf to
" give him my hand—that, my heart
" tells me, I never can do. I ſee his
" merit; but I ſee it with a coldneſs
" that is unintereſting—I feel grateful to
" him, for the honour he does me in
" this flattering diſtinction; but he
" ought to be happier than it is in my
" power to make him. He ſhould be
" bleſt (if my prayers have influence
" with the only Diſpoſer of Happineſs,
" it will not be long ere he is) with the
" hand of a woman, who looking round
" the univerſe ſhould ſee but him, who
" ſhould feel that marked preference for
" his virtues and perſon, as would con-
" ſtitute him all the world to her—I wiſh
" him too well, not to ſave him the mi-
" ſery of being united to a woman whoſe
" heart is inſenſible to that paſſion, with-

" out

" out which there can be no felicity in " marriage.—You, my lord, as his friend, " and being maſter of my ſentiments, " will kindly put my refuſal of the ho- " nour of his alliance in the language " moſt likely to reconcile him to it— " And I ſhall feel myſelf ſtill more in- " debted to you, than I have ever been, " if by your eloquence he is convinced " of the reaſonableneſs of my motives."

" Oh!" cried he, " what language ſo " ſweet as your own!—And yet poor " Hawley! he muſt admire you ſtill " more for your noble frankneſs. I will " write to him immediately—I would " rather not ſee him juſt now—You " have, my dear Miſs Hanbury, in a " manner that does the higheſt honour " to your heart and head, within theſe " two months rejected ſeveral, as the " world calls them, advantageous offers. " —All ages and conditions ſee, and " bow to your extraordinary merit and " charms——And can that heart," continued he, taking her hand, " can that " heart be naturally cold and inſenſible? " —Oh! 'tis impoſſible!—Yet," added he, letting her hand drop, and walking away

away from her, "what right, what au-
"thority have I to aſk the queſtion—a
"queſtion that I, ſituated as I am, can
"have no intereſt in having anſwered—
"but," coming up to her again, and drawing a chair cloſe by her, "it may
"be ſome ſatisfaction to Hawley, if you
"will indulge me with ſaying whether
"that valuable heart—no, it would be
"aſſuming too much—Why ſhould I
"ſeek to develop your private thoughts?
"Be they ever ſacred."

ARPASIA knew not how to act; ſhe had no preference to declare; and Lord Derville ſeemed, though much agitated, not to urge her confidence—but with her uſual openneſs ſhe ſaid to him—"I do aſſure you, my lord, I will ne-
"ver engage myſelf to any man with-
"out taking your advice in it—I think
"it very probable I ſhall never marry—
"My mind muſt alter exceedingly in-
"deed if ever I ſhould."

LORD DERVILLE, riſing, ſaid, "then,
"madam, I have no hopes to give my
"friend."

"AH! my lord," ſhe anſwered, "how
"fruitleſs muſt theſe hopes be that

"would

" would end in diſappointment!" He ſighed, and again was going to ſpeak, but it was only an effort, for he ſaid nothing, but, bowing, left her. She felt herſelf diſtreſſed and agitated—her mind was confuſed—perhaps her rejection had diſpleaſed Lord Derville. He had intereſted himſelf in the cauſe of his friend —The alliance would have been ſuitable, even if ſhe ſtill had been an heireſs —As a friend, his lordſhip might wiſh ſuch an eſtabliſhment for her—If ſhe had diſpleaſed Lord Derville, how wretched ſhe muſt be!—To have obliged him, ſhe could do every thing ſhort of giving her hand to Sir James Hawley. " Oh! let me have the happineſs " of reinſtating myſelf in his eſteem— " —let me poſſeſs his friendſhip, and the " univerſal love of mankind would be " nothing in my ſight." A tear accompanied this ſoliloquy. She took the book again in her hand, but the ſubject was the laſt thing ſhe thought of—As a proof, when Lady Derville came in, which was ſometime after, ſhe looked over her ſhoulder—" Well, my dear," ſaid ſhe, " you have a mind to give that

" author

" author a thorough reading; for hav-
" ing gone over one way, you will take
" it I ſee another."

ARPASIA bluſhed a deep ſcarlet, at now for the firſt time ſeeing ſhe held the book the wrong ſide upwards—She laughed at her inattention, frankly ſaying, it proved ſhe was either thinking of ſomething elſe, or elſe how great an adept ſhe was in reading.

THIS little incident however alarmed her much, and made her reſolve to be more circumſpect in future, and not ſuffer her imagination to outrun her reaſon; for ſhe had been tracing out in her idea her poſſeſſion of a little neat cottage in ſome retired part, where ſhe might indulge herſelf with the ſweet, and, ſhe hoped, innocent pleaſure of counting over, and revering the virtues of her friend—He too, ſhe flattered herſelf, ſometimes, perhaps once in a year, for a day or two, together with Charlotte, would dignify her dwelling with his preſence—How ſhould ſhe look forward to the ſtated period of ſeeing him—and know no lapſe of time, from fixing her eye on that hour which would again make

make him an inmate—A heart, pure as hers, which almoſt doubled the propriety of this indulgence, might well ſend up its conſent to her face and neck, when diſcovered in her reverie.

She ſaw no more of Lord Derville that day, nor indeed till he joined them on the road to Brighton. She made no enquiry concerning Sir James Hawley, ſatisfied, from the pleaſing attention of his lordſhip, that the fear of offending him was merely ideal.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIX.

The Walk on the Stein.

THE morning after their arrival, Arpaſia, to whom the ſea was a new object, expreſſed a deſire to go down to it. Lady Derville had the greateſt inclination to walk upon the Stein, becauſe there ſhe ſhould ſee moſt people; and the firſt perſons that attracted their notice were Lady Marſden and Colonel Howitzer, on whoſe arm ſhe was leaning. It was plain enough, from Charlotte's manner, that the rencontre was not purely accidental; and as obvious too that ſhe felt hurt by the circumſtance of his being thus attended. Arpaſia made theſe obſervations with a ſincere grief. She had too often ſeen the viſible partiality of her friend for the Colonel, but the trait of jealouſy, which exhibited itſelf on her countenance, gave a more ſerious alarm than any thing. Charlotte had never diſcovered ſenſibility—ſhould ſhe do ſo now in favour of a man ſo unworthy of inſpiring it, ſhe dreaded what might be the conſequence.

conſequence. Lady Marſden viſited frequently at Lord Derville's. She was a young widow of good fortune, and ſufficient ſpirit to enjoy it, without being ſcrupulous about trifles.

THE Colonel joined them immediately, and walking next to Charlotte found means to make his peace in a ſhort time. Her gloom vaniſhed, and ſhe became the beſt company in the world, which the old dowager contributed to, by ſaying ſhe was heartily glad to be relieved from her companion, who was the dulleſt of all poſſible creatures in a *tete-á-tete*. Charlotte, who never found him dull, naturally attributed it to a cauſe in her favour.

ARPASIA, finding ſhe ſhould not be miſſed in the party, ſtrolled down to the beach to enjoy the glorious ſcene before her. The vaſt ocean, as it appeared to her, filled her with the moſt ſtupendous idea of the great Creator. She ſat down on a rock, and could have remained there for ever, with her eyes fixed on the rolling waves, which were now coming in; and perhaps ſhe might, through ignorance of the quick advance of the tide, have ſtaid too long, had not her guardian angel in the perſon of Lord Derville, in-

terrupted her ſerious contemplation, by warning her that ſhe would ſoon be overtaken by the waves.

She made moſt ſenſible and judicious obſervations on the watry expanſe, which at once divides and connects the globe; that wafts the riches of one country to the remoteſt verge of another, and *ſpeeds the ſoft intercourſe* of letters *to the baniſhed lover from the captive maid.* Lord Derville could have liſtened to her for ever. He heard with rapture all his own ſentiments delivered in the ſweeteſt language and moſt perſuaſive ſounds. They were doubly endeared to his heart becauſe they were hers.

THEY went together to the Stein, but the trio had gone to eat ice at Melang's, whither they followed, and in the evening they went to the rooms.

HERE was a conſtant *routine* of amuſements moſt admirably adapted to the taſte of Charlotte. The library, the raffles, the walk, the rides, the rooms, the balls, were alternately viſited; and, what is worſe in reality, though ſhe thought it gave a zeſt to the whole, Colonel Howitzer was for ever of her parties.

A MAN

A MAN who never loved his wife, cannot be jealous of her affections; but as ſhe is the guardian of his honour, he ſuffers if ſhe is negligent of her charge.

Lord Derville extremely diſliked the Colonel, and one day remonſtrated with her on the glaring impropriety of being always ſeen with ſuch a man. Charlotte received his admonitory lecture with a very bad grace; and replied with ſome tartneſs, "that people ſhould be doubly "cautious of their own conduct, who "were ſo quickſighted in their obſerva-"tions on others."

As Lord Derville was wholly unconſcious of deſerving the ſarcaſm, it cauſed no alteration in his countenance or behaviour. He had never, in the ſlighteſt inſtance, violated his matrimonial engagement, and had been moſt ſcrupulouſly exact in paying her every attention, and indulging her fancies. He examined his heart in relation to his attachment to Arpaſia; and the reſult was, the conviction of the moſt delicate purity. It is true, he loved her with all the ardour that it was poſſible for ſuch a woman to create in a boſom formed of the tendereſt materials,

and feelingly alive to the ſoft paſſions. However ſtrong his affections were, he knew he had, out of reſpect to the object, ever kept the ſtricteſt guard on his looks, his actions, and his expreſſions. Charlotte could not have ſuſpicions. Her inſenſibility and indifference towards him muſt preclude that quickneſs of obſervation that frequently ſees more than there is in reality. He then rather attributed her ſharp retort to a childiſh petulance, impatient of the leaſt controul.

THERE was however a remoter cauſe, which it was not likely he ſhould be acquainted with. The Earl of Carberry, ſtung with rage and jealouſy at the repeated rejections he had met with from Arpaſia, (for notwithſtanding the ſteady repulſe ſhe had given him as has been recorded, he determined in the peſeverance of his diſguſting addreſſes, and had even ſent her letter after letter) ſet himſelf to watch the countenances of every one that approached her, and likewiſe the manner in which ſhe was affected. From his diſcerning eyes it was impoſſible for ſo artleſs a creature as Arpaſia, and whoſe ſoul might be read in her animated

animated features, to conceal the real pleaſure ſhe received from the converſation and friendſhip of his ſon. Not that he could promiſe himſelf much ſucceſs from his malevolence; yet he laboured to poiſon the mind of Charlotte, by infuſing into it ſuſpicion that an attachment was formed between her huſband and friend—This manœuvre required ſome management, which however was eaſy enough to a man whoſe whole life had been ſpent in ſchemes of the worſt kind.

INDIFFERENT to her huſband—and not poſſeſſing innate virtue enough to care whether that of her friend was immaculate, while neither was a reſtraint on her actions, ſhe left it to themſelves to ſettle their own affairs as they liked beſt—But when Lord Derville in a ſerious manner, took notice of a partiality ſhe was too conſcious was reprehenſible, though as yet not criminal, the detection rouſed her anger, and as people of weak underſtandings think their own lapſe juſtified by the faults of others, urged her to make the recrimination ſhe did—Not that ſhe even wiſhed it otherwiſe—the

imprudence of her friend, who had ever been looked on as a pattern, ſhe thought would excuſe any error ſhe might be guilty of—And two or three winters in high life, had entirely removed the idle prejudices ſhe had imbibed when young, of virtue and modeſty being the brighteſt jewels in a woman—Her aſſociates ſoon taught her a different leſſon—and that ſhe was not a greater proficient, proceeded more from accident than principle—She had for ſome time been heartily tired of Arpaſia's company, nor would ſhe have been ſo anxious to retain her with her, but from the hint Lord Carberry had given, which induced her to hope that both Lord Derville and ſhe would be too much taken up with their own attachment, to have leiſure for inveſtigating her conduct.

CHAP-

CHAP. XL.

The Picture of a bad Father.

WHEN the propoſal for the Derviles paſſing ſome months at Brighton was firſt talked of, Sir James Hawley was to have made one of the party—the reaſon of his not joining it, muſt be obvious to every one. Out of humour with himſelf and careleſs what became of him, he liſtened to the perſuaſion of ſome young men of his acquaintance, who urged the beſt way to forget one fine woman, was to ſacrifice at the ſhrine of another leſs rigorous--with a mind very little in tune for ſuch adventures, he followed them to a noted houſe, where proſtitute beauty puts on all its charms, to enſnare and allure the giddy and licentious.

SURROUNDED by a groupe of the ſame claſs with himſelf, he eſpied Lord Carberry—He felt a conſcious bluſh overſpread his cheek, but the volatile and diſſipated air of that nobleman ſoon reconciled him to the idea of mixing in the jovial ſet. Lord Carberry at firſt pretend-

ed to be ſurprized at ſeeing him, judging he had been at Brighton.

THE very name of the place cauſed a ſudden dejection to uſurp the aſſumed gaiety of Sir James. He ſighed and ſhook his head—He was rallied by the old devotee of vice—and bid, the next time he appointed an ambaſſador to the court of Cupid, not to ſend a diſaffected miniſter—He haſtily demanded what Lord Carberry meant?—"Are you then to learn," ſaid he, "that Arpaſia Hanbury is too "dear to Lord Derville, for him to act "with juſtice by his friend Hawley?"

"Trifles light as air
"Are to the jealous confirmation ſtrong
"As proofs of holy writ."

EVERY action, each word of his once valued friend Lord Derville, now was canvaſſed, and in the breaſt of Hawley amounted to treaſon againſt their "anci-"ent amity"—He recollected circumſtances that his fooliſh credulous heart looked on as ſo many proofs of regard, but which now, poſſeſſed of the clue Lord Carberry had given him, were evident marks of his guilt—Oh! it was clearly ſo—and only blindneſs, like his, could have

have been ſo impoſed on—The reflections ariſing from this detection of baſeneſs in Lord Derville, prevented all reliſh for the kind of amuſement he was likely to meet with in that place—He threw down five guineas as a peace-offering, and haſtily quitted a ſet, a heart like his was too refined ever to find enjoyment in—He returned to his houſe, the moſt wretched of human beings—From early boyhood he had loved Lord Derville—He had communicated to him, in the moſt perfect confidence, every emotion of his ſoul;

——"To thee his ſimple heart,
With eaſy faith and fondneſs breath'd its ſmart."

Some myſtery too he remembered during their excurſion in the country—"He "has never behaved with openneſs to "me," he cried in a reproachful tone—"He has hardly ever mentioned the "name of Arpaſia—Ever being unwil-"ling to enter on the ſubject—Artful, "diſſimulating, treacherous Derville! "—Never will I hold converſe with "thee again—I abjure thy friendſhip "—or rather thy proſtitution of that "ſacred ſentiment." He ſat off the

next day for the Continent, reſolved never to ſeek a rencontre with the man he had once eſteemed—but at the ſame time ſhould he fall in his way, to reproach him with his perfidy and ſting his ſoul with remorſe.

LORD CARBERRY, after a night of debauch, retired with the ſatisfaction of having for ever diſunited two friends, who but for him would have ended their days together in harmony. This he thought was paving the way to the deſtruction of Arpaſia. He hoped by ſome means her character would ſuffer, which would partly gratify his revenge, if it did not in ſome degree facilitate his further wiſh of obtaining her ſome how or other; at any rate he ſhould diſturb that happineſs he could not taſte.

CHAP. XLI.

The Boat in Diſtreſs.

LORD DERVILLE had procured a very good teleſcope, which afforded infinite amuſement to Arpaſia, by enabling her to diſcern objects at a great diſtance on her favourite element. She had never ſeen a ſhip. The boldneſs of the ſhore at Brighthelmſtone prevents the near approach of veſſels of any ſize. It was natural for one ſo ignorant of maritime affairs, to wiſh with eagerneſs that a ſhip ſhe ſaw through the glaſs, would come near enough for her to examine it accurately. Lord Derville explained to her the danger the veſſel would encounter, ſhould her wiſh be indulged; "but," continued he, "though the mountain "will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet "may go to the mountain—What ſay "you, Miſs Hanbury, ſhould you object "to an excurſion on the water? Char-"lotte, I am certain, will be happy to "be one of the party—The day is fine,

"I will

"I will go down to the beach to ſecure a "boat, and I ſhall expect you ladies to "follow as ſoon as you can." No ſingle negative was offered—Charlotte in her own mind was ſorry the plan was to be put in immediate execution, as ſhe could not enlarge the company. However, as this happened the day after the lecture, as ſhe called it, from her huſband, ſhe had not courage to propoſe ſending to thoſe ſhe would wiſh to augment it—The ladies then were ſoon ready to join his lordſhip on the beach, where was a boat waiting for them; Charlotte, however, either was, or pretended to be panic ſtruck, though ſhe had been on the water ſeveral times; having croſſed the Channel, ſince her marriage, from Dover to Calais. Arpaſia with great good humour, begged they might return home; but Lady Derville declared, if ſhe and my lord would not go, notwithſtanding her unaccountable fear, ſhe ſhould be under the neceſſity of attending them.—After ſome time ſpent in altercation, through the exceſs of politeneſs, Charlotte came off victorious. Arpaſia had too much confidence in Lord Derville

to

to feel the leaſt apprehenſion of impropriety in going with him. They only propoſed rowing and ſailing up to the veſſel, make the tour of it, and return directly.

It has been juſtly ſaid that excurſions on the water, are parties of pleaſure, till they are put in execution—So many things frequently occur to overthrow the amuſement propoſed—Nothing could be more promiſing than their outſet. They preſently reached the ſhip, and Arpaſia felt the utmoſt ſurprize at the ſize of it, the buſy countenances ſhe ſaw, and above all the pleaſing deſcriptions her companion gave of men of war, &c.

In a joking way, Lord Derville aſked the ſteerſman how long they ſhould be in reaching Dieppe? "Why," ſays he, "with the wind that is ſpringing up, "for I ſee a gale coming, we ſhall not "be above twelve hours in getting thi-"ther."

"What ſay you to the trip?" ſaid his Lordſhip to Arpaſia, "ſhould you "not like to ſee France?" She paid more attention to the boatman juſt then, than ſhe did to his propoſal—his ſaying he

he *ſaw a gale* rather alarmed her; they however aſſured her there was no danger, and relying on their knowledge, ſhe ſuppreſſed her fears, and again entered into pleaſing converſe with Lord Derville. He deſcribed to her the lakes of Geneva, and aſked her if ſhe had ever read Rouſſeau's Eloiſe, and particularly the account which St. Prieux gives of the rocks of Meillerie? She replied ſhe had, and admired the language extremely—Lord Derville then broke forth in a rapturous paſſage in French, where St. Prieux meditates the intention of claſping Eloiſe in his arms, and plunging into the lake, and almoſt involuntarily caſt the moſt paſſionate glance at Arpaſia, at the ſame time putting one arm round her waiſt—She ſhrunk from his embrace, and anſwered in Engliſh, "I like to read French, "but I never talk it where I can uſe my "own language to be underſtood." He ſaw the reproof which was thus delicately conveyed, and continued the converſation ſo as to make the boatmen partakers of it, though they preſumed not to join in it.

THEY

THEY now thought it time to put about, and one of the men ſaid, "we "muſt make what haſte we can, I ſee "bad weather coming." A blackneſs, which thoſe uſed to the ſea know very well portends a ſtorm, glided at a great diſtance on the waves; the clouds gathered, and the wind roſe, accompanied with ſome faint flaſhes of lightening. Lord Derville, who began to grow apprehenſive for his poor partner, begged them to make to ſhore with all expedition; at the ſame time uſing every endeavour to keep up her ſpirits, which at this time ſeemed to be guided by the winds fluctuating as they did, between hope and fear. The men exerted themſelves to make the port of Brighthelmſtone; but the wind had ſhifted ſo many points, that their efforts were fruitleſs for a long time—The terror of Arpaſia now increaſed to an alarming degree—ſhe grew pale as aſhes--the thunder rolled over their heads, while the waves waſhed them every minute. Lord Derville was almoſt diſtracted—he accuſed himſelf for being the cauſe of affrighting her. She entreated him not to reflect on himſelf—it was an indulgence

dulgence to her wiſhes—ſhe lamented being the means of danger to him.—— Oh!" cried he, preſſing her to his boſom, for the boat rolled ſo much that he was obliged to hold her—" talk not of dan-" ger to me—could I but ſee *you* ſafe, " the wreck of the univerſe, with all " that I could feel, would be nothing— " Say, lovely, amiable Arpaſia, can you " pardon me?"

" I CAN pardon every thing," ſaid ſhe, " but your undeſerved anger againſt " yourſelf—And indeed to ſee you thus " alarmed terrifies me ſtill more than " the ſtorm—But I hope we ſhall ſoon " get to ſhore—Pray, Sir," to one of the men, " ſhall we be long in getting to " that land? we ſeem very near it."

" As near as we are," he replied, " we perhaps may never reach it—for " my part I do not think the boat can " live in ſuch a head-ſea."

" OH! my God!" exclaimed Arpaſia, lifting up her claſped hands, and ſinking half breathleſs on the ſhoulder of Lord Derville, " what will become of us?" The heaving of the boat made her ſick, and her own dreadful apprehenſions al-

moſt

moſt deprived her of reaſon. The agony of Lord Derville's mind cannot be expreſſed—he folded the near expiring beauty in his arms, and preſſing his cheek to her pale face, exclaimed, "Yes, my "Arpaſia, we ſhall die—but we ſhall die "together." He hung over her in ſpeechleſs deſpair for ſome minutes. To give her more freedom, he pulled off her neckcloth, and unbuttoned her ſhirt collar—could he have diveſted himſelf of apprehenſion for her, whom more than life he adored, what a ſcene of beauty was now exhibited. Her lovely neck and throat open to his view, and more eminently ſet off by the contraſt of her black habit. Her fine hair diſhevelled, and falling in ringlets over her ſhoulders.

"But who can paint the lover as he ſtood?"

If my readers have contemplated the beautiful painting of De Loutherbourg's Boat in Diſtreſs, they may have a faint idea of the diſtraction that ſeized Lord Derville.

The boat at laſt providentially made land, but at a ſea-port about twelve or fourteen miles from Brighton. They hove into

into a ſmall creek; and, making the boat tolerably ſteady, Lord Derville bore his precious charge through the ſea up to his knees, and conveyed her to a little hut on the beach. She was ſo much exhauſted with terror, that it was a long time before ſhe quite recovered her ſenſes. A poor woman, who lived in the cottage, made a fire to dry their cloaths; but Lord Derville was more anxious to get ſome cordial for his beloved Arpaſia. They poured a little brandy down her throat, which revived her. In the utmoſt rapture he fell on his knees to thank Heaven for their preſervation; and, as he knelt before her claſped her lovely waiſt, and imprinted a moſt fervent kiſs on her lips. His own, uttering the fondeſt tendereſt things that love could inſpire. Arpaſia, though no prude, felt alarmed at his manner. She now too ſaw the diſorder of her dreſs. "For hea-"ven's ſake, my lord," ſaid ſhe, "leave "me!" She withdrew her hand haſtily from his, and turning away while the tears flowed faſt down her cheeks—"To "what has my folly expoſed me!"

"Oh!"

"OH!" cried he in the moſt ſupplicating manner, "will you not make ſome "allowance for the diſtraction of having "ſeen you nearly dead, and now beholding you in ſafety?"

SHE made no anſwer, but caſting a look of reproach on him, threw a pocket handkerchief round her neck, and buttoned her dreſs cloſe. Her neckcloth was gone. He conſtrued her look in a ſenſe that almoſt deprived him of reaſon.

"GOOD God!" he exclaimed, "am I "then ſo abhorred a monſter in your "idea, as to be thought capable, at ſuch "a time too, of taking a baſe advantage "of your ſituation? Can you for one "inſtant believe me ſo loſt to every ſenſe "of decency, as by my act to offend a "purity I would die to preſerve? Oh! "Miſs Hanbury, for heaven's ſake, "think better of me—think better of "yourſelf than to imagine, that excel"lence, ſuch as yours, could inſpire any "ſentiments but veneration and reſpect "in the boſom of a man, who is not di"veſted of human nature. Believe me, "madam, nothing but my dreadful ap"prehenſion of preſent ſuffocation could "have induced me to remove any part

"of

" of your dreſs. My alarm was " equal to your danger—in ſuch a mo- " ment could I ſeek a gratification of ſo " mean a curioſity? Could I have a " thought of expoſing any, the leaſt part, " of your lovely perſon, at the inſtant " when I too firmly believed we were " both going to be plunged into the " depths of the ſea for ever? I will leave " you, ſince you requeſt it with ſo much " earneſtneſs. I will do more, I will " for ever baniſh myſelf from your pre- " ſence, which in a moment of agony I " have fatally diſcovered is too dear to " me. But to repair the injury which " deſpair and anguiſh cauſed me to com- " mit, I will for ever forego it. And all " the recompence I aſk for ſuch a ſacri- " fice is not to be thought of by you as " the vileſt of all human beings."

ARPASIA could no longer deny credit to aſſertions, which were indeed true, and which the diſtreſs ſhe ſaw him in proved beyond doubt. However, ſhe ſtill intreated him to repair, if poſſible to meet with any conveyance, to Brighton immediately. He agreed to do ſo, and prevailed on her to remain quietly there

there till he could ſend a carriage for her. He had the happineſs to ſee peace and aſſurance of his honour reſtored to the heart of the adored Arpaſia. He vowed never to give her cauſe to repent of her forgiveneſs, and reſolved to keep a padlock on his lips. Indeed nothing but the ſituation he was in could have urged him to a diſcloſure of the paſſion that almoſt conſumed him; for he revered as much as he loved her. His paſſion was worthy of the object. Nothing could exceed its fervor, but its purity.

He got a horſe, on which he made the greateſt expedition to Brighton; and as ſoon as he arrived had ordered a chaiſe to be got ready. He would have wiſhed Charlotte would have gone to eſcort Arpaſia, but finding ſome difficulty ſtarted, he diſpatched Catherine, attended by a man ſervant, for the purpoſe of conveying her lady in ſafety to the place, which ſome hours before they had quitted with ſo pleaſing a proſpect of ſpending an agreeable day. So little do we ſhort ſighted mortals know what evil is prepared for us, and what clouds may intervene to obſcure the ſun from our view!

CHAP.

CHAP. XLII.

The Fete Champetre.

THE extreme diſorder of Arpaſia's mind, added to her fright and fatigue, made bed the moſt deſirable place for her, as ſoon as ſhe reached Lord Derville's. To bed ſhe went, but not to reſt. Her danger, her eſcape, and the conſequent diſcovery of Lord Derville's real ſentiments for her, formed a conflict of thought, which, ſuperadded to the incidents of the day, threw her into a fever. She was confined to her room ſeveral days; and, as quiet was ſtrongly recommended by her phyſician, Charlotte came very ſeldom to ſee her. Lord Derville, though almoſt diſtracted at the conſequences of her fright, &c. was obliged to reſtrain his ardour, and content himſelf, as well as he could, by frequent enquiry—He almoſt feared her confinement was a pretence to keep out of his ſight—" Yet why ſhould ſhe do thus—" when ſhe knows one word from her,

" would

" would remove me to the fartheſt verge " of the globe if ſhe wiſhed it?—Every " thing," he added, " ſhe can do with " me, but make me ceaſe to remember " her worth, her beauty, her ſweetneſs " —In that one article of memory I muſt " diſobey her."

CHARLOTTE paſſed her time, quite to her own mind—ſhe had no gentle reproving looks from Arpaſia, and her huſband was too much abſorbed in grief for the illneſs of the former, to waſte a thought on her—His attention, however, was raiſed at laſt by the imprudence of her conduct—The whiſper of ſcandal had gone forth—and the finger of ſlander pointed at Charlotte and Colonel Howitzer. Lord Derville in ſtill plainer terms, told Charlotte, the diſgrace ſhe was incurring by her behaviour, and that unleſs ſhe put ſome reſtraint on herſelf, he ſhould leave Brighton while yet ſhe had a reputation to preſerve.

SHE replied, ſhe knew her own innocence, and was very indifferent about the opinion of the cenſorious world—from which, ſhe believed, others had their ſhare of calumny as much as, and perhaps

haps more deſerving than herſelf—this was the ſecond time, on the ſame occaſion, ſhe had thrown out this hint.

He aſked her the meaning of her alluſion with great earneſtneſs—As ſhe had really no grounds for what ſhe ſaid, but the information of Lord Carberry, who had requeſted ſecreſy from her—ſhe pauſed, not knowing what to anſwer—He then thought as he did before, that it was only a ſpiteful way of recrimination, without other meaning than merely to vex him and vent her anger.

He told her the only way to avoid the cenſure of the world, was to act with propriety in the character aſſigned us—that her frequent appearance with Colonel Howitzer, a man of known reprobate principles, and Lady Marſden, at beſt but of doubtful fame, were ſufficient reaſons for the world judging as it thought it had a right to do, on a woman, whoſe apparent proceedings ſet it at defiance—that if ſhe had any ſenſe of what duty belonged to her family, her child, or reputation, ſhe would relinquiſh acquaintances that muſt bring diſgrace on them all—And further he muſt tell her, if *ſhe* was too careleſs

careleſs to pay the neceſſary attention to thoſe requiſites *he* muſt take the charge of her conduct on himſelf—He had been informed ſhe had accepted of an invitation to a Fete, to be given by ſome of the moſt diſſipated men at Brighton, he begged ſhe would have ſo much regard to the peace of her family, as not to be preſent.

She anſwered haughtily, ſhe did not marry to be controuled—She never did any thing ſhe was aſhamed of, nor ſhould ſhe give up the ſociety of her choſen friends to humour the caprice of any one—and ſo ſaying, ſhe flung out of the room in high diſdain—She went directly to Arpaſia's chamber, who perceived ſomething had vexed her—ſhe enquired with the moſt friendly ſolicitude. Charlotte, whoſe heart was burſting with anger, fell a crying, and related how harſhly her huſband had treated her—Arpaſia, who really, even as Charlotte told the ſtory, ſaw nothing but ſound reaſoning on the ſide of Lord Derville, ſtrove to convince her friend of the actual impropriety of her diſpleaſure, and her wiſh that ſhe would comply with his requeſt.

"I KNEW," ſhe anſwered pettiſhly, "that you would be of his ſide."

"MY deareſt Charlotte," replied Arpaſia, "and ſo would you too, if you would "allow your reaſon to give a verdict, "you are at preſent a little chagrined, "will you give me leave to mediate be-"tween you?"

"I AM convinced," ſaid ſhe, "if you "will aſk him to let me go, he would not "deny me—You can do any thing with "him—-Do, my dear Arpaſia, come "down with me."

"Do not, my love, urge me to make "an improper requeſt to his lordſhip— "I will go down with you moſt certain-"ly, and hope to correct any little dif-"ferences between you, and pray do con-"ſider the matter maturely—and reflect "in your own mind whether it is worth "while to ſacrifice domeſtic peace, for "the trifling advantage of paſſing your "time with perſons, who are really not "worthy your friendſhip."

"DOMESTIC peace!" ſhe repeated, "domeſtic ſtupidity!—What on earth "can be ſo dull, as we paſs our lives "together—But come down, dear crea-

"ture

"ture—I depend much on your elo-
"quence—For go I muſt—and will too,
"let the conſequence be what it may."

ARPASIA, leaning on the arm of Lady Derville, deſcended to the drawing-room, where ſhe found his lordſhip, equally ſurprized and pleaſed at ſeeing her—But how did his appearance ſtrike her!—Diſtreſs and anxiety had worn him to the bone—making ſtill greater ravages in his fine figure, than illneſs had in hers—He trembled ſo much, as to be hardly able to pay her the cuſtomary compliments after her indiſpoſition and confinement.

IT was impoſſible to enter on the buſineſs Charlotte had ſet her heart on, without ſome opening—Lord Derville was too much delighted by his wife bringing to his view, the woman ſo dear to him, and whom he had been ſo anxious to ſee, that he inſenſibly forgot the anger with which ſhe had flown from him—Charlotte hoping the good humour that reigned among them, would operate in her favour, felt eaſier than ſhe had done ſome time. Company came in—Mr. Travers arrived from London—The even-

ing paſſed off very harmoniouſly, and Arpaſia, as an invalid, retired early, ſo that nothing was ſaid of the morrow's engagement—and Lady Derville, not being quite aſſured of ſucceſs, thought this ceſſation a relief.

All the morning ſhe was preparing her dreſs, which was to be ſuperb in the fancy ſtyle—Lord Derville ſaw the preparations, and reminded her of his wiſh, ſhe would give up the ſcheme; he had heard a ſtill more unfavourable account from his uncle, and an aſſurance that very few women of character had accepted tickets—He repeated this circumſtance to her—he offered her every indulgence if ſhe would oblige him—She peremptorily told him, nothing on earth ſhould prevail on her not to go—Arpaſia intreated her to conſider—with an arrogance not uſual to her, ſhe ſeemed both to ſet the menace and intreaty at defiance.

Irritated by her obſtinacy, Lord Derville told her, if ſhe perſiſted in acting thus oppoſite to his will, one houſe ſhould no longer contain them. Arpaſia, ready almoſt to die, ſeized the hand of Charlotte, and with tears urged her not to caſt away her

her happineſs—Charlotte incorrigible, replied ſcornfully to the threat of her huſband, that ſhe felt the utmoſt indifference for his reſolution, in conſeqence of her pleaſing herſelf, which ſhe ſhould do at all events—Lady Marſden's carriage drove up to the door.

WITH a ſarcaſtic air, Charlotte turned to Arpaſia—" I thank you much for " your mediation—However, your be- " haviour is juſt what I expected it to be " —I fear not having my conduct juſti- " fied; and at the ſame time, as I may " not ſoon have an opportunity again, I " will do your lordſhip this juſtice, that " till you became acquainted with Miſs " Hanbury, I never experienced the leaſt " unkindneſs from you— that ſhe has a- " lienated your affections, is obvious to " more than myſelf."

SHE haſtened to the door to meet Lady Marſden's ſervant—Arpaſia ſunk almoſt fainting on the window ſeat—" Stay " Charlotte," cried his lordſhip—" Lady " Derville, I inſiſt on your explaining " yourſelf."

" OH!" ſaid Arpaſia, " for Heaven's " ſake ſtop her! do not let her quit the

" houſe under ſo cruel an idea of my " baſeneſs."

SHE regarded them not, but haſted on, and was conveyed away in an inſtant.

WHAT a blow was this for Arpaſia!—All the pleaſing elegant ſchemes ſhe had planned, to ſweeten the hours of her future life, now vaniſhed from her ſight—The cottage, graced with his preſence, and ſanctified by Charlotte's accompanying him, ſwam from before her eyes—the pleaſing proſpect was waſhed away by her tears—What had been the loſs of her fortune compared to this?— Alas nothing!—But to be accuſed of alienating the love of a huſband from his wife—and that wife the friend who ſuccoured her in diſtreſs, how black the account appeared againſt her.

LORD DERVILLE approached her—" Oh! my ever amiable Miſs Hanbury," ſaid he, " how ſhall I hope for your for-" giveneſs, when you are ſo great a ſuf-" ferer by thoſe who belong to me?—" Cruel, injurious Charlotte!—Too well " thou knoweſt my affections were never " of conſequence enough in your eſtima-" tion, to attempt the gaining them!—Be

" not

" not thus diſtreſſed—your tears over-
" whelm me with anguiſh—Why ſhould
" the unmerited reproaches of that fool-
" iſh inconſiderate creature have power
" to affect you thus?"—She roſe to quit the room—" Oh! leave me not," cried he, " leave me not in anger; if you
" do, I know not what may be the con-
" ſequence of my deſpair—ſuffer me on
" my knees to implore your pity and for-
" giveneſs of my folly—I in a moment of
" madneſs dared (no, it was not the ef-
" fect of temerity—I knew not what I
" was doing or ſaying,) but I unhappily
" diſcloſed the paſſion, which has almoſt
" conſumed me—Diſtracted at the ſub-
" ſequent illneſs you ſuffered, I have
" never ſlept or enjoyed a moment's
" peace—Charlotte has perceived the
" effect of my grief, and from a deſire
" of wringing my heart, with all the re-
" finement of torture, has thrown out
" this hint againſt you—How am I pu-
" niſhed for my incapacity of with-hold-
" ing my tendereſt affections from the
" moſt lovely, moſt amiable of her ſex."

" Oh! my lord," cried Arpaſia, ſtruggling to paſs him, " how improper for me

" to hear this diſcourſe—If deſpair urges
" you to utter ſuch things, reaſon and
" prudence demand me to avoid the
" hearing them—I hope to convince La-
" dy Derville of the injury ſhe has done
" me, by her ſuſpicions, and then for
" ever retire where ſhe ſhall never again
" hear of the hapleſs Arpaſia."

" Is this then," ſaid he, " the laſt in-
" terview you will allow me?"

" THE neceſſity, I hoped, would have
" been obvious to your lordſhip."

OH! Miſs Hanbury," he cried, " I
" cannot bear you ſhould leave me im-
" preſſed with the idea that your image
" reigns in the heart of a man void of the
" principles of honour. No, bright an-
" gel as you are, your own pure boſom
" entertains not thoughts more refined,
" more delicate than mine harbours for
" you." He then entered into a detail of his matrimonial engagement, and his wiſh of being able to inſpire a paſſion in Charlotte's heart, and that he himſelf could feel a lively one for her. He laid open every thought to her view. He freely owned that he found his wife the leaſt formed to conſtitute his happineſs,

and

and that her ſole joy was in ſpending her time in diſſipation and amuſements of every kind. "But," ſaid he, "the firſt "moment I ſaw you I was convinced— "fatally convinced, that my heart had till "that moment never ſeen its counter- "part. One view of you fixed me yours "for ever. Oh!" continued he, "does "Miſs Hanbury recollect the Blue Do- "mino?"

ARPASIA demanded with ſurprize, why he aſked?

HE went on—"I hardly know what I "propoſed to myſelf from aſſuming that "character, after declining attending "you to the maſquerade. It was, I be- "lieve, to have an opportunity of diſ- "courſing with you freely. Yes, I was "the perſon who was witneſs of your be- "nevolent charity in Eveſham vale. "Here," cried he, opening his pocket book, "is the very half guinea you be- "ſtowed on honeſt Greenwood. I pur- "chaſed it of him. And here is the co- "py of a little drawing which you made "of the cottages in the glade. Do you "remember the confuſion that ſeized "me when I firſt ſaw you in Lady Der-

" ville's dreſſing-room?—till that inſtant " I knew not that ſhe was acquainted " with you. But from the moment of " my ſeeing you in Eveſham vale, I too " well knew I could never forget you. " From the lips of that worthy creature, " Greenwood, I heard the ſweeteſt eulo- " gium of your goodneſs, which was all " confirmed from the ſteward of the " Caſtle, Mr. Tomkins. Look at " this precious piece of money," ſaid he, kiſſing it, and preſenting it to her. " It is a proof—and bears the date of " your birth. You muſt recollect hav- " ing it once in your poſſeſſion. Behold " this drawing too, it is an exact copy, " but in my faithful heart is a yet better " copy of the elegant deſigner—no, I re- " tract what I have ſaid, it is the origi- " nal herſelf that lives, and will for ever " live there."

" And ſhall you condemn the poor " inconſiderate Charlotte," ſaid Arpaſia with warmth, " while you thus freely " avow, although married, ſo ardent a " paſſion for another? Oh! debaſe me " not ſo much in my own opinion, by the " bitter reflection that I have inſpired ſo

" unwar-

" unwarrantable an affection. I have lif-
" tened too patiently to it; but the an-
" guiſh it has placed in my boſom is a
" ſufficient puniſhment. I looked on you
" as my friend, as one in whom I could
" repoſe my moſt unlimited confidence.
" How have I been deceived where I
" hoped I might have truſted!"

"No, I call heaven to atteſt the purity
" of my love," he cried, " I never one
" moment entertained a thought injuri-
" ous to you. That I adore you, I will
" not attempt to deny. My paſſion is
" woven in my exiſtence, which muſt
" ceaſe ere that can leſſen. But have I,
" in the ſmalleſt inſtance, wronged my
" wife? I have indulged her in every
" wiſh of her heart. I have, when I
" could diſcover her inclinations, even
" prevented her forming a wiſh. Never
" have I ſought to reſtrain her amuſe-
" ments till now, that they have taken a
" turn detrimental to her reputation and
" my honour. I ſeek not to build my
" juſtification on her failings. Nothing
" ſhall make me deviate from the path of
" rectitude. All I implore is your for-
" giveneſs, which however I will not at-

" tempt

" tempt to purchaſe, by deceiving you " into a belief that I will tear your image " from my breaſt. No, I will never do " ſo. When we are ſeparated from each " other, I will cheriſh it with the fervor " of a hermit for ſome loved relic of his " favourite ſaint. Believe me, ſuch is " my veneration for your virtues, that " I would not, for the advantages all the " world could give me, even accept a fa- " vour from you, that ſhould ſully the " purity of that virtue I ſo much admire, " and which firſt impreſſed my heart. " What cauſe have you then to condemn " me, who would not ſolicit, or even ac- " cept a conceſſion on your part that ſhould " occaſion the ſigh of recollection to " heave that dear boſom, if ever fate " ſhould ſmile on ſo faithful a paſſion—if " ——"

" Oh! talk not of ifs," cried Arpaſia, " nor let me longer liſten to ſuch ſeduc- " ing language. Believe me, my lord, " my heart is relieved of great part of its " anguiſh in being able to think you leſs " culpable than I at firſt thought. Be " content with that acknowledgment " from me; perhaps too free, your ſitu-

" ation

"ation conſidered. I will wait to ſee
"Lady Derville, and hope I ſhall be able
"to convince her of the injuſtice ſhe has
"done me. Could I but have the felici-
"ty of awakening in her heart a pro-
"per ſenſe of what ſhe owes herſelf, her
"child, and you, I ſhould then leave you
"with more ſatisfaction. I may be hap-
"py enough to be the peace-offering;
"and, if ſhe is endued with the leaſt ſen-
"ſibility, ſhe may, in the double relation
"of your wife, and mother of your love-
"ly Auguſta, become hereafter ſo dear
"to you, as to obliterate the too tender
"affection which you have unfortunate-
"ly encouraged."

"You then wiſh me to forget you?" ſaid he, with a melancholy air.

"I WISH you to purſue thoſe ſteps as "will lead you to happineſs," ſhe anſwered. "And now," ſhe continued, "permit me to thank you moſt ſincerely, "for the many acts of friendſhip I have "received at your hands. They will be "ever dear to my memory. I could not "acquit myſelf of ingratitude were I to "ſay leſs. And I hope I may ſo much

"rely

"rely on your honour as to ſay this with-
"out incurring my own cenſure." The tears ſtole down her cheek. Lord Derville's eyes were full; he could hardly thank her for her goodneſs, her condeſcenſion; his voice faultered. The emotions of diſtreſs grew too painful to be ſuppreſſed; and, though he feared he was viewing her for the laſt time, yet he could not remain in the room without acting improperly. He haſtily quitted it. Arpaſia felt relieved by his abſence; ſhe could now freely indulge the ſorrow that oppreſſed her heart; yet, fearful of his returning and being again expoſed to the pain of parting, ſhe ſoftly ſtole up ſtairs to her chamber, to enjoy all the luxury of grief uninterruptedly.

A LITTLE after ten he ſent up a meſſage, merely out of a compliment, to know if ſhe would chuſe to take her ſupper below. Being ſtill an invalid, her excuſe appeared not extraordinary to the ſervants; and in the dreſſing-room ſhe partook of a ſandwich, which he had the pleaſure of preparing for her.

CHAP. XLIII.

The Elopement.

TOO diſturbed to think of ſleep, Arpaſia went into the nurſery, and ſat a long time contemplating the lovely innocent Auguſta, while in a ſweet ſlumber —but fearing her preſence reſtrained the nurſes and kept them up beyond their hour—ſhe returned to her chamber—unſettled, unhappy and in a train of thought not likely to calm her ſpirits, ſhe walked about her room for more than an hour—She then ſat herſelf down to make a retroſpect of the day—There was but one circumſtance that was not pregnant with mortification, diſappointment and vexation; this little gleam of comfort then iſſued from the delicate behaviour of Lord Derville—Though he had avowed the paſſion, he had before inadvertently diſcovered, yet he neither in word or action laid claim to more than ſhe was intitled to grant him—namely, her pity—He had of his own accord propoſed

poſed their final ſeparation—He only requeſted not to be thought "the vileſt of "human beings"—His reſpect and veneration were conſpicuous in every look. —She might ſtill eſteem him; that felicity was left her; and for that bleſſing ſhe would be ever thankful to Heaven—This reflection ſoothed her ſelf-love—It did more towards calming her mind than any reaſoning or philoſophy could have affected.

"I will wait," ſaid ſhe, "till Char-"lotte returns—I will, before I ſleep, "reconcile myſelf to her—She ſhall not "think ſhe has cauſe to accuſe me of in-"gratitude, and ſo flagrant a breach of "friendſhip, as fomenting a difference "between a huſband and his wife."—Theſe reſolutions and meditations engroſſed all her ideas ſo much, that ſhe knew not how the time paſſed—She heard the houſe clock for the firſt time —It ſtruck four. The lateneſs of the hour alarmed her—ſhe gently rang the bell, as ſhe did not mean to keep Catharine out of her bed, though her own determination was fixed to wait till Lady Derville's return.

WHEN her maid came up, ſhe told her, there was ſad doings below—that his lordſhip had ordered the carriage to go at three o'clock to the rooms, where the Fete was held—that the ſervants were juſt returned, with an account that Lady Derville, on their being announced to her, had ſent word they need not wait—they further ſaid, many people had quitted the rooms—That at four, Lord Derville had ordered the doors to be ſhut.

ARPASIA heard the latter part of the intelligence with horror—ſhe waited not one moment to deliberate on her actions, but ran down ſtairs to the drawing-room, where ſhe found his lordſhip walking about the room in great agitation.

"LET me intreat you, my lord, for "Heaven's ſake," cried ſhe, "to coun-"termand the order you have given, of "ſhutting your doors!—Do not—Oh do "not drive the poor inconſiderate Char-"lotte to deſparation—You know not "what the conſequence may be."

"SHE is herſelf totally regardleſs of "conſequence," he replied—"My un-"cle has been here ſome hours ago—

"The

"The perſons who compoſe the aſſem-
"bly, that weak and imprudent woman
"has gone to, in direct oppoſition to
"diſcretion and my intreaties, are ſuch
"as virtue would never aſſociate with—
"Mr. Travers has been informed of ma-
"ny circumſtances, that make it neceſ-
"ſary I ſhould take other meaſures—
"leſt I am laughed at in the world, for
"tamely ſubmitting to the infamy of my
"wife."

"Oh! not ſo, I hope—not ſo—Char-
"lotte has been too careleſs of her hap-
"pineſs; but I truſt ſhe will yet ſee her
"error--You are too much diſcompoſed,
"my lord, to riſk ſeeing her to-night;
"ſuffer me to prevail on you to retire
"to bed—Judge of the intereſt I take in
"your peace, by the diſtreſs I feel, at
"the haſty reſolution you have taken.
"Do, my good Lord Derville, you know
"not how much depends on the event;
"retract your commands. May I not
"be permitted to ring the bell?"

"You may do any thing *with* me," he replied, "But ſee you not how much
"a huſband's honour ſuffers by the con-
"duct of his wife?"

"I HOPE

"I HOPE to have the comfort of re-
"conciling you both, and convincing
"my long loved Charlotte, that there
"can be no happineſs like the domeſtic,
"and then—"

"WHAT then?" cried Lord Derville, eagerly, "What then, my deareſt Miſs "Hanbury?"

"THEN," ſhe replied, "I ſhall not "have a wiſh unſatisfied."

THE countenance of Lord Derville changed to the deepeſt melancholy. Arpaſia continued—"You will follow my "advice and retire to bed—I will ſee "Charlotte. I hope Heaven will fur-"ther my endeavours of awakening her "ſenſibility, and that I ſhall hear ſhe has "ſought you out, and never left you, till "a perfect reconciliation has been ob-"tained. You may, perhaps, from this "day's event date happier ones, than yet "you have known—That you may, is "my earneſt, my almoſt only requeſt to "the Almighty!"

"OH!" cried he with emotion, "you "ſhall direct—ſhall guide me in every "thing—Leave me but the melancholy "privilege of memory—Interdict me not "there, and I will ſubmit to any thing."

ARPASIA thought it moſt prudent to hold no further converſe with him, as ſhe had gained her point and the facility with which ſhe could influence him, as it increaſed her regard, it increaſed her concern likewiſe, at the thought that ſhe muſt be conſtrained to reſign his friendſhip for ever.

THE remainder of the night ſhe waited but no Lady Derville returned—The boſom of Arpaſia began to fill with a thouſand fears—Her too ready apprehenſion pictured to her the rage of Lord Derville, and injured as he conceived himſelf by Colonel Howitzer, he would ſeek him, and the conſequence might be the death of both—The terrible images haunted her mind—Her preſages grew too gloomy, ſhe gaſped for breath, and almoſt fainted, from the horror the idea had conjured up.

HAPPILY ſhe thought of Mr. Travers; ſhe wrote a few lines to him, intreating him to come immediately, as her fears of what would be the effect of Lord Derville's riſing and finding his wife had not yet returned—at nine in the morning—were too violent to know how to act for the beſt.

THE good man inſtantly obeyed her ſummons, but could afford her little conſolation—She however conceived great hopes that his prudent council would prevent any miſchief to Lord Derville—and that yet matters might be adjuſted by conciliatory meaſures, which ſhe ſtill flattered herſelf would melt the heart of Charlotte. The reſult of their conference, was to ſend to the lodgings of the colonel —He had not been at home all night— Lady Marſden had returned from the Fete, between two and three—"Oh! "good God," exclaimed Arpaſia, "where "then can the poor infatuated creature "be!"

"LAUGHING with her gallant at the "buſtle ſhe has made at ſo public a place "as Brighton; and at the diſgrace ſhe "has brought on her family."

"OH no! I cannot believe ſo hardly "of her, ſhe has had ill adviſers—They "have inſtilled into her mind, that I am "not her friend—Oh! how much I am "ſo!—Dear Charlotte, would to Heaven "I could lure thee back"—She ſtarted on hearing Lord Derville's bell—"Pray, my "dear ſir," ſhe cried to Mr. Travers—

"Do

" Do go to his room, before a ſervant is " admitted"—ſhe haſtened into the hall to ſtop any one going up.

Mr. TRAVERS found ſome difficulty in reſtraining Lord Derville from ſetting forth to make enquiry after the colonel, as he was but too well convinced in his own idea, that the imprudent Charlotte had put herſelf under his protection—Mr. Travers, however, diſſuaded him from ſo wild an attempt, and promiſed he himſelf would go to Lady Marſden, who was moſt likely to be acquainted with all her movements—In ſearch then of intelligence, though without hope of its being ſuch, as would even palliate the diſgrace of Charlotte's conduct, he poſted away to the fair dowager.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIV.

The Fine Lady.

IT was almoſt too early an hour to promiſe admittance into a fine lady's *ruelle*, even at a watering place. After waiting near an hour, Mr. Travers was introduced to the dreſſing-room of Lady Marſden. She was ſipping coffee in a negligent manner, with an humble companion, a lap dog and a parrot. The lap-dog was by much the moſt amiable of the ſet, the parrot and the ſhe friend talked by rote, the latter echoing the ſenſe of her patroneſs.

SHE had flattered herſelf that her viſitor was the injured huſband, and had decorated her perſon in the moſt alluring ſtyle of careleſs elegance, as ſoon as ſhe heard there had been a meſſage of enquiry from his lordſhip's. Her diſappointment when Mr. Travers was announced caſt a gloom on her features, which by no means contributed to heighten the brilliancy of her morning looks—for it is well

well known that an evening and morning beauty are two things.

TRAVERS, in his honeſt blunt manner, entered on the object of his embaſſy directly. At firſt the lady expreſſed her ſurpriſe why the enquiry ſhould be made of her. He aſſured her it was well-known Lady Derville had been in her party the preceding evening; and it could not be a ſecret to her, that ſhe had not ſince returned to her huſband's houſe.

HER ladyſhip, finding Travers was maſter of the ſtory, and from a certain freedom in his manner, too plainly ſhewing that he did not entertain the higheſt opinion of her, thought proper to enter into the juſtification of Lady Derville. "Why, Mr. Travers," ſaid ſhe, "not "that I pretend to entirely acquit her la-"dyſhip of imprudence, yet you muſt "allow her provocation was enough to "have determined any woman of ſpirit "to act, in ſome meaſure, as ſhe has "done."

TRAVERS interrupted her not, thinking as Sterne ſays, he ſhould not know the ſooner what ſhe aimed at by aſking the queſtion. She went on—"Miſs Ben-

"ſon

" ſon here can witneſs for me, how often
" I have lamented the peculiar ill treat-
" ment of Lady Derville."

" Oh! yes, that ſhe had often and
" often, a hundred times if poſſible."

TRAVERS was all ear and ſurpriſe.
" For, my good ſir, think how very hard
" to have a particular friend, one to
" whom ſhe had ſhewn the utmoſt kind-
" neſs, to have her creating differences
" between a man and his wife. I am
" ſure I could not bear it, as I have told
" Miſs Benſon over and over; and, not
" only to make quarrels, but really carry
" on an intrigue under her very eye."

" CAN your ladyſhip allude to Miſs
" Hanbury?" aſked Travers, out of breath with eagerneſs.

" MOST certainly—their ſhameful fa-
" miliarity was obvious to every body."

" BY Heaven, it is falſe!" cried he, in a voice that made both the ſnakes tremble.

" OH! ſir, pardon me, my friend, La-
" dy Derville, had too many proofs."

" I CAN hear no more. Your lady-
" ſhip muſt not relate ſuch ſcandalous
" falſhoods, but to toad-eaters and led-

" captains. Your ſervant, madam. On-
" ly let me tell you the reputation of an
" Arpaſia is not to be trifled with. Her
" virtue ſhould ſtrike ſuch worthleſs be-
" ings with awe. It may be injured, but
" cannot be leſſened by ſuch ſcandal."
Saying which, in great wrath, he hurried out of the room without his errand, which was to have learned more information of the fugitive. He neither ſaw or heard any body till he entered the breakfaſt parlour at Lord Derville's; where, throwing himſelf into an arm-chair, all in a heat by walking faſt and paſſion, he was unable to ſpeak for a minute. At laſt—" Well,
" here are fine doings indeed," ſaid he,
" Who will they accuſe next, I wonder?
" Oh! that their tongues were bliſtered
" by every word of ſcandal they utter!"

THERE ſeemed no end to his expletives. Arpaſia, who entered the room when ſhe heard him come in, with the ſweeteſt and gentleſt voice, aſked him what had been the reſult of his enquiry after her unhappy friend?

" WHO," ſaid he, gazing on her, ſhall
" eſcape, when ſuch an angel as this is
" calumniated? And yet the mouths of
" theſe infernal wretches muſt be ſtop-
"ped."

" ped." Both Lor dDerville and Arpaſia became all eagerneſs to know what he meant. " Well may you be ſurpriſed," continued he, " at my incoherent diſ-" courſe; the information I have heard " has almoſt turned my brain. Could " any one believe, to ſhelter her own in-" famy, that your wife ſhould alledge a " cauſe in your infidelity with Miſs Han-" bury?"

" WITH Miſs Hanbury?"

" YES; and that your ſhameful fami-" liarity had induced her to take the ſteps " ſhe has."

" CAN any one believe ſo vilely of " me?" aſked the poor Arpaſia, with a voice of terror, and a face pale as aſhes.

" No, my amiable young friend, no " one whoſe hearts are not intereſted to " utter falſhoods can believe it."

" MAY Heaven forſake me for ever," cried Lord Derville, " if ever calumny " was ſo little deſerved! Oh! Miſs " Hanbury, will you not execrate the " day on which you honoured our houſe " with your preſence? My dear uncle, " I am ſure you know my principles, " and know that my heart would deteſt

" the idea of giving cauſe for ſuch cen-
" ſure, but that they ſhould join in vili-
" fying the beſt, the moſt virtuous of her
" ſex, calls for the loudeſt chaſtiſement."

" And what will you do? Will draw-
" ing your ſword, and embruing your
" hands in blood, be the means of vin-
" dicating Arpaſia's fame? No, it would
" be only pointing the arrow to wound
" her reputation ſtill more."

" Oh! my lord," ſaid Arpaſia, " do
" not undertake ſo hazardous a buſineſs.
" What but conſcious innocence could
" ſupport me againſt the malevolence of
" evil tongues. I thank my God," con-
tinued ſhe, dropping down on her knees, and lifting up her clapſed hands, while the tears trickled from her eyes—" I
" thank my God, I feel, I know myſelf
" innocent in word, thought, and deed."
She roſe, and wiping away the faſt-drop-
ping tears—" But that the friend of my
" early youth, that my Charlotte ſhould
" be my accuſer. There I am vulnera-
" ble, there they have power to wound
" me!" Her gentle ſoul melted at the reflection that ſhe whom ſhe had for years loved, ſhould be thus turned againſt her.

She

She could not reſtrain her ſorrow, ſhe hid her face in her handkerchief and ſobbed aloud. What a ſcene was this for Lord Derville? He threw himſelf on his knees before her, "Oh! Miſs Han-"bury," ſaid he, in a voice almoſt choaked with grief. "Dare ſuch a wretch as "I remain a moment longer in your "preſence? Will not this infamous re-"port make the very name of Derville "poiſon to your ears! That I—that *I* "ſhould be the accurſed means of ſtig-"matiſing your character; *I*, who would "have died the moſt cruel of deaths to "have ſaved you the ſmalleſt pain?"

"My dear nephew," ſaid Travers, clapping him on the ſhoulder, "Is it "thus you are ſeeking to remove the "ſuſpicion of your attachment to Miſs "Hanbury? by ſuch paſſionate looks "and expreſſions?"

"Oh!" anſwered he, "if it is a crime "to adore virtue, beauty, elegance, and "all that is perfection in woman, then "am I the guiltieſt of beings. But if "ever that adoration was ſullied with "the leaſt thought, that chaſtity might "not avow to the whole world, may the

" moſt unheard-of torments befal me this " moment! That I love her! Oh! my " dear uncle," continued he, throwing himſelf on his neck, and weeping like an infant—" Can it be wondered I ſhould " love her? Such goodneſs, ſuch more " than mortal perfection! But that I ever " ſought hers in return, with what clear- " neſs I can acquit myſelf. My vows to " Charlotte have been inviolate. I ſtrove " to love her when ſhe was my wife. I " never could diſcover one quality to " engage my eſteem. Too delicate in " my ſentiments to be attached to perſon " alone, I felt a *vacuum* in my heart, till " one day—one fatal day I muſt call it, " ſince the peace of the lovelieſt beſt of " beings, is affected by its event—acci- " dentally I beheld Miſs Hanbury. I " knew not Lady Derville had ſuch an " acquaintance. The moment I ſaw her " my heart aſſimilated towards her; ſhe " was in the act, the moſt delightful to " that Heaven ſhe is the immediate pat- " tern of, relieving indigent age; I could " not help making a compariſon between " her and the woman I was deſtined to " call wife; it was not the beauty of her

" perſon

" perſon I compared with Charlotte's—
" no: it was the virtues of her heart. I
" learned her whole ſtory. I could not
" help regretting, with a ſigh, that Hea-
" ven had not given me ſuch a partner
" to paſs my life with! Sometime after
" I returned home, on entering Lady
" Derville's dreſſing-room, I thought I
" ſaw her with her child in her arms;
" ſo unuſual a ſight made me exclaim
" how happy it made me—when, on the
" ſound of my voice ſhe turned round.
" Oh! what became of me, when the
" dear angel, whoſe image had never one
" moment left my thoughts, now ap-
" peared in the moſt engaging of atti-
" tudes and employments. But I re-
" ſtrained myſelf. I kept the moſt fer-
" vent, the moſt pure of all paſſions cloſe
" confined within my own boſom. I did
" myſelf ſo much violence as to become
" an interceſſor with her for Sir James
" Hawley. Never ſhould the beloved,
" revered object have known the power
" ſhe had in my heart, had it not been
" for the near approach, as I thought, of
" death to us both. I could not in that
" moment which ſeemed going to divide

" us for ever, reſtrain the emotions of " my heart; but ſhe knows, and can tell " you—I had propoſed an eternal ba- " niſhment to myſelf. I thought laſt " night that my eyes would never again " behold her. Oh! that they never " had, (though they have no other com- " fort of or uſe for ſight) ſince malevo- " lent tongues have dared to traduce ſuch " matchleſs worth!"

THE old man had been ſobbing almoſt the whole time Lord Derville ſpoke— " Oh!" cried he, " ſuch a pair ſhould " not have been divided! But, my dear " nephew, ſomething muſt be done. The " eſtabliſhment of Miſs Hanbury's fame " muſt be the firſt object."

" OH! loſe not a thought on me," ſhe cried. " Doomed to misfortune and " obſcurity, it matters not what becomes " of me—And after all, it is but accele- " rating my plan of retirement. Seen " in the world but a ſhort time, I ſhall " ſoon be forgotten when ſeen no lon- " ger."

" No; you muſt allow me, as having " lived more than three times your age, " to know ſomething more of the world

" than

" than yourſelf. Be guided by me, I " ſhall beg the favour of you to accom- " pany me directly to my ſiſter, Lady " Anne. She loves you. She has ſeen " (and for her dear nephew's ſake la- " mented with me) the levity, for then " we hoped it was no more, of his wife. " She will gladly receive you. Her cre- " dit with a world, that too often judges " from appearances, will have great " weight in its opinion of you. You, " my dear Derville, ſhall give me your " honour to remain quietly here, till my " return from depoſiting my ſweet " charge in ſafety. We will then fall " on ſome plan for our future operati- " ons."

ARPASIA moſt thankfully accepted of ſo eligible an aſylum as the houſe of Lady Anne. " May I, however," ſaid ſhe, " preſume to make an addition. I " think my excellent Mr. Travers will " indulge me. It is to take the dear lit- " tle Auguſta with me."

" OH! God!" exclaimed Lord Der- ville, " and is it thus I am to be taught " to ſtrengthen my heart againſt its fond " attachment?"

ARPASIA thought it beſt to take no notice of this ſally of his lordſhip. She haſtened out of the room, to apprize her maid and the nurſe with the arrangement that was made—and in an hour ſhe was ſeated by her good friend, with the two female attendants—and the ſweet infant, who was ſo inexpreſſibly dear to her, playing in her lap.

SHE would not endanger Lord Derville's peace by taking leave of him, and indeed it would have been almoſt too much for her. His ſufferings and merit had made a very tender intereſt in her boſom. She had always eſteemed him; and his paſſion, at once ſo pure and reſpectful, was not likely to leſſen it. Though ſhe poſſeſſed not the weakneſs ſo common to the ſex, of indulging an affection which circumſtances rendered illaudable, ſhe had for ſome time taken the reſolution of never marrying, ſince the duties of a wife ſhe judged incompatible with the ſentiments ſhe wiſhed not to repreſs for ſo amiable a man.

As the female ſervants were in the coach, their converſation could only be on general ſubjects. They reached Rye-

gate

gate that night, from whence Mr. Travers diſpatched one of his ſervants to Lady Anne to apprize her of the addition that would be made to her family. The next day, Arpaſia found herſelf quite ſettled with this worthy woman, who contributed all in her power to raiſe her ſometimes drooping ſpirits.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLV.

A Second Removal.

ARPASIA had but one objection to remaining with Lady Anne, which was, that ſhe deprived that lady of ſeeing her nephew, of whom ſhe was extremely fond. And, added to her own wiſh, not be too much expoſed to the danger of his ſociety after his *ecclairciſement*, it would have ſtrengthened the ill opinion the world had already conceived of her, if ſhe was ſeen at any time in his company—With that candour and openneſs ſhe ever adhered to, mentioned her thoughts to her good friend, who immediately ſaw the wiſdom of it—After ſome weeks, when the countenance of Lady Anne had done away all ſurmiſe of diſgrace in the eyes of the diſcerning, Arpaſia was conducted by her to Mrs. Travers, the widow of the late general, who lived in retirement, at Hornchurch in Eſſex.—She was not wholly a ſtranger to the perſon of Arpaſia; having dined with her once

at

at Lady Anne's, when ſhe was in town on buſineſs relative to her penſion—As ſhe lived much alone, the proſpect of ſo pleaſing a companion was acceptable to her—and the circumſtance of being without much company ſuited the mind of Arpaſia—Here ſhe thought ſhe could remain, at leaſt till her legacy was paid, ſhe intirely gave up the idea of going to law with her uncle—Her income, to be ſure, was very circumſcribed, but as ſhe was ſickened of the world, the produce of the principal, would ſupport her well enough with her faithful Catherine, who had declared ſhe would never leave her.

Mr. Travers returned to Brighton within two hours after he had delivered Arpaſia, with her young companion, in truſt to Lady Anne—and got to his nephew late at night, being unwilling to leave him too long a prey to his own melancholy ideas—He had, however, buſied himſelf with making every enquiry after the fugitives, but could learn no ſatisfactory intelligence; when Mr. Travers returned, they examined the ſervants, not one of whom was miſſing—The perſon who was the immediate attendant

of

of Lady Derville, declared ſhe had not the leaſt ſuſpicion of her intentions, nor had ſhe ever known of her receiving a letter or meſſage from the colonel—In this age of gaiety there is little occaſion for confidants; ſo many public places and large aſſemblies in private houſes, render the facility of intrigues very obvious—And when people make a practice of viſiting three or four different places in one night, there can be no difficulty of communication with a favourite gallant, unnoticed by the multitude—Mr. Travers would not—and Lord Derville could not make a ſecond attempt, to gain information from Lady Marſden, though they were both convinced, ſhe alone had been privy to the elopement—No trace could be diſcovered, but as a veſſel had ſailed early that morning for Dieppe, it was moſt probable they had proceeded to the continent.

At the deſire of Derville, Mr. Travers wrote to Mr. Bromley, giving a long account of his daughter's abſenting herſelf from her family, and if ſhe had not taken the route to Berkſhire, he much feared ſhe was gone on a worſe deſign.

THEY then ſat off for London, as their ſtay at Brighton was unneceſſary, whither as ſoon as the poſt could reach them, a lettter arrived from Mr. Bromley, bewailing with moſt bitter grief the abſence of his dear child, who had been driven into this raſh meaſure, by the cruel uſage of her huſband, as he had learned from a letter ſhe had written to him; on which ſhe had palliated her conduct by the occaſion that cauſed it, an illicit amour between Lord Derville and her falſe friend, whom ſhe had ſuccoured at the time of her diſtreſs; and from whoſe recent behaviour, ſhe had too much reaſon to believe, that the ſmall fortune her grandfather left her, was owing to ſomething bad in her character; though ſhe had artfully gloſſed the affair over, ſo as to deceive her to the ruin of her peace. She hoped her dear father would not give credit to many falſe reports, which ſhe doubted not would be circulated to her diſadvantage, as ſhe too well knew the cenſure a woman incurs by making an appeal to the world, from the cruelty of an huſband; ſhe hoped too, ſhe ſhould meet with the juſtice and candour ſhe

ſhould

ſhould ever adopt, and which induced her to declare, that till the unfortunate admiſſion of Miſs Hanbury into their family, there never could be a happier couple than they.

THE remainder of Mr. Bromley's letter was filled with a general invective againſt Arpaſia, which was not likely to make it entertaining to either Lord Derville or Mr. Travers; the former ſo well knowing her innocence, and the latter revering her virtues.

CHARLOTTE had artfully evaded letting her father know where ſhe had concealed herſelf—The poſt mark was London, but that could lead to no information—All then they could expect was, that ſome of them ſhould hear from her when her finances ran ſhort. They could not for a certainty know how ſhe was provided with money—Her allowance was a very ample one, ſuitable to the fortune ſhe brought—on enquiry, ſhe had ſome debts with her trades people, but not to a large amount. Very few of her cloaths were taken, ſo that ſhe muſt expend a good ſum in procuring proper dreſſes, &c.

Mr.

Mr. TRAVERS, however, thought it incumbent on him to aſſert the innocence of Arpaſia, who was ſuffering the greateſt injury by Mr. Bromley's opinion of her.—He therefore took a journey into Berkſhire, being indefatigable in the cauſe—and as the ſtrongeſt proof, brought that of the countenance afforded her by Lady Anne, than which nothing could operate more powerfully with ſuch a man as Bromley, who idolized any body that was poſſeſſed of a title—He mentioned another corroborating circumſtance, of an offer ſhe had received from Sir William Welbank, who did not think her character at all tarniſhed by the unjuſt ſlur that had been thrown on it, from the wicked deſigns of one party, and malevolent diſpoſition of another—It was a cruel circumſtance too for Mr. Bromley, to acknowledge the virtue of Arpaſia, as it tacitly ſtigmatized his only child; yet as he had not a bad heart, he paid the more attention to the aſſertions of Mr. Travers, of whoſe knowledge and worth he entertained the higheſt idea.

THE diſgrace which the cuſtom of the world annexed to the huſband, whoſe wife

wife is unfaithful, preyed on the ſpirits of Lord Derville—Joined to this, he felt

"A painful anguiſh pining at his heart."

His love, his veneration for the amiable Arpaſia, increaſed every hour—and the prudent neceſſity there reigned, of his giving up her acquaintance, contributed to his diſquiet—What never to ſee her! Never to liſten to the angelic ſound of her voice, and hear the wiſdom of Minerva, with the chaſtity of a Diana, and the ſoftneſs of all the Graces, flowing from her divine lips!—To be looked on no longer as her friend—Nay, to have the piercing reflection that ſhe had ſuffered by his friendſhip, more than ſhe could have done from his enmity—Oh! how ſevere ſuch retroſpections!—How did he execrate himſelf for being the cauſe—the innocent cauſe of pain and trouble to a woman, whom to have cheriſhed through life, would have been to make his own the moſt felicitous that mortal man could know.

MANY of his friends adviſed him, if poſſible, to procure a divorce, as the frequency of ſuch affairs took off the diſgrace

grace—and as even Divine Authority gave a ſanction to the diſſolving a marriage that had been violated—Oh! thought he, if I could but flatter myſelf, that my beloved Arpaſia would receive my hand, when I once more was free to offer it, how gladly would I accede to the propoſitions! However, the thing was by no means eaſy to accompliſh—Lady Derville had never intruſted any one with her ſecret tranſactions, and her ſituation at preſent was intirely unknown. There was every concurrent circumſtance to induce them to believe, ſhe was with Colonel Howitzer, as they had diſappeared together; but to procure proofs of their criminality muſt be reſerved to ſome future period, if ever they could be obtained.

TORN with a thouſand conflicting paſſions, his health declined very faſt—And thoſe, who knew not, that "what paſſed "within baffled all deſcription," were loudeſt in their cenſure of Lady Derville, for abandoning a man who was breaking his heart for her loſs.—The pity of theſe hurt him more than any thing elſe—He knew on ſuch terms he merited it not—

Charlotte

Charlotte had no one good quality to endear her to his heart—He could not on the niceſt inveſtigation diſcover ſhe had ever done one ſingle act of charity ſince ſhe had been his wife—Her tears never flowed but from the diſappointment of ſome party of pleaſure--and, like a child's ſorrow, it was appeaſed as ſoon as ſomething elſe was ſtarted to amuſe her—How was it poſſible for ſuch a character to be beloved by Arpaſia, whoſe own was ſo diametrically oppoſite in every part of it?—They had been educated together at ſchool. Among the number of young ladies on that eſtabliſhment they were every one intitled to very large fortunes except Charlotte—It has been before obſerved, the ruling paſſion of Mr. Bromley was vanity—Induced by that deſtructive principle, he aſſociated his daughter with perſons much her ſuperiors, in hopes ſomehow or other by their connections to aggrandize Charlotte—There were notwithſtanding many indulgences which ſhe was precluded from, many accompliſhments, which girls, whether they have a taſte for them or not, are ambitious of having inſtruc-

inſtructions in, as it gives them an *eclat* with the other ſcholars, but which the very moderate income of Mr. Bromley could not afford—Arpaſia's heart was endued with benevolence; for it ſhewed itſelf before ſhe could pronounce the word, or knew its meaning and extent—Surrounded as it was with every bleſſing which affluence could beſtow, and likewiſe ſeeing the reſt of the ſchool applying themſelves to the various works of fancy and genius, which in theſe modern times adorned the female education; ſhe pitied Charlotte Bromley, whom her partiality judged as capable of ſhining in theſe employments as her compeers—Charlotte too, uſed to lament the difference which a few thouſands made between herſelf and her companions—It was enough for Arpaſia—In a little time it was not her fault, if Charlotte made not an equal proficiency with the others, as ſhe received inſtructions from all the maſters.

The mind of Charlotte was ductile, and had ſhe always continued under the eye of Arpaſia, her heart would not have been

been corrupted; but ſhe was without ſettled principles, and a perfect inſtance of Pope's illuſtration, "that woman has "no character at all." In every thing Arpaſia had the lead. Was there any object of compaſſion, Arpaſia's purſe was firſt out. Her tear gave the hint to Charlotte to expreſs commiſeration, and lament, as ſhe ſeldom failed to do, that her means were ſo inadequate to the feelings of a generous heart. Arpaſia gave her credit for theſe feelings, but always conſoled her that the ſmalleſt trifle given with good will was acceptable in the ſight of Heaven, who would bleſs the donation in proportion to the virtue of the donor. This doctrine ſuited her very well; and ſhe really cheated herſelf into the belief that had ſhe the poſſeſſions of Arpaſia, ſhe ſhould act as Arpaſia did. She not only deceived herſelf, but Arpaſia likewiſe, and unwilling was ſhe to take up a different opinion of Lady Derville from that ſhe had for years borne Charlotte Bromley. She ſtrove to view her actions in the moſt favourable light, making every allowance for youth and ſituation, without

without taking into the account that her age was the ſame; and that no change of ſituation, as ſhe had proved, could work an alteration in her own ſentiments —but thus ſhe judged of every one with candour and indulgence.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVI.

Melancholy Reflections.

ARPASIA painfully regretted the apparent defection from virtue in her early friend—She longed to find her—to clear up the doubts and jealouſies which ſhe much feared had driven her to thoſe deſperate meaſures, that muſt end in her total ruin—Still ſhe hoped ſhe might be reclaimed from error and ſin; ſhe was young, and not hacknied in the ways of vice, pernicious counſels had been her bane—perhaps ſhe now looked on herſelf as abandoned of all her family; and that a return to the paths of innocence was impoſſible—"Oh!" ſhe cried, while ſhe fondly preſſed the infant of her once beloved Charlotte to her boſom, and watered its face with her tears—"Oh! that I could ſee "the unhappy creature!—That I could "hear her repentant ſighs—! that I "could reconcile her to herſelf and the "world!—Deareſt Charlotte, muſt this

"lovely

" lovely babe never be taught to liſp the " honoured name of mother?—Muſt thy " name ever be a ſtranger to her? Shall " I never experience the delight of ſee- " ing thee claſp the beauteous offspring " of the moſt amiable of men to a ma- " ternal boſom?"

THUS did the amiable Arpaſia paſs many hours at Lady Anne Travers's, more to her ſatisfaction, who ſecretly enjoyed " a luxury to vulgar minds " unknown," than in ſpending her days in ſociety where her heart could feel no intereſt—but as it was neceſſary ſhe ſhould always appear with her ladyſhip, ſhe ſacrificed her own wiſhes to thoſe of Lady Anne, which was to re-eſtabliſh her in the opinion of the world.

WHEN at Hornchurch, ſhe had ample time for reflection and meditation—but ſhe had no dear Auguſta on whom to laviſh her fondneſs, and to be the ſilent witneſs of the grief that would ſometimes find a paſſage through her eyes—Mrs. Travers was of a very retired turn of mind—She had not, ſince the death of a beloved huſband, mixed in a world

that now had loſt the few charms it ever preſented to her view—Though in the ſociety of ſuch a perſon as Arpaſia, ſhe ſeemed to have a chance of being both amuſed and edified—for to thoſe who knew her ſtory, ſhe certainly had great claim to praiſe, for the reſignation with which ſhe had borne misfortunes, which are more eaſily underſtood by the world, becauſe all the world knows the value of riches.

THERE are a thouſand other evils that cling nearer the heart of ſenſibility than the privation of wealth, but as only thoſe can feel for ſuch, as are themſelves endued with exquiſite ſenſibility likewiſe, the proportion of pity is very ſmall.

ARPASIA was ſingularly circumſtanced with reſpect to ſituation and connection—She had no friend in the world, but thoſe to whom ſhe had been introduced by the one who traduced her fame—She had no tender confidant in whoſe faithful boſom ſhe could repoſe her troubles, and meet conſolation and comfort, if not relief from her unquiet thoughts. How hard this change and how ſwift!—it was not quite five months ſince ſhe

was

was reigning like an abſolute monarch in the Caſtle of Hanbury, or rather like a benevolent providence diſpenſing happineſs and pleaſure to a multitude, "who bleſſed her upriſing and down ſit-"ting"—Now behold her waiting for the payment of three thouſand pounds, to eſtabliſh herſelf in ſome little retreat far from the "buſy haunts of men" to be in obſcurity, and *waſte her ſweetneſs in the deſert air!*

THE allowance from her grandfather had been from an early age five hundred a year—but the purſe of the benevolent and generous ſeldom runs over—and the claims of the indigent and diſtreſſed had pretty well exhauſted her finances—Oh! how ſevere to ſuch a heart, to be obliged to turn aſide from the voice of complaint, from the look of mute anguiſh—to give a few pence, where before ſhe beſtowed gold—and to ſay with the tear of compaſſion glittering in her eye—"alas! I "have no more to give!" Mrs. Travers was a good ſort of woman; but there was no ſympathy in her feelings—abſorbed in the immediate griefs that had affected her peace, her heart melted not

at the woe of others—unleſs indeed a widow wept the death of her huſband—but then compaſſion expanded not her boſom, which would heave with ſighs—ſhe would retire from ſuch ſcenes to her own room; and give redoubled tears to the tomb of her loſt general—never once reflecting on the many comforts ſhe had left to counterpoiſe this one inevitable event of human life—while the poor wretch ſhe turned away from, had with her beloved partner, loſt every hope, every chance of ſupport—Perhaps doomed to ſee the offspring of her happier days driven to a pariſh-houſe, expoſed to cruelty and hardſhip; no kind parent to protect and ſhelter them!—But of her diſtreſs, Mrs. Travers had no idea, becauſe ſhe had never experienced it in her own particular feelings.

ARPASIA had always been uſed to the kind concurrence of her grandfather—His ear was ever ready to hear her ſolicitations, and join with her in relief.—Lord Derville had done the ſame, which had been the means of

per-

perpetuating her beneficence, even though her fund for charity was circumſcribed—Now ſhe had no reſource—"ſhe gave to miſery all ſhe had—a tear."

CHAP. XLVII.

The Correſpondent.

TO the infinite ſurpriſe of Arpaſia a letter was brought her one day, which ſhe ſaw, ſigned "Carberry."

IT began with the moſt ſincere ſorrow that any one connected to his family ſhould have ſo injuriouſly traduced ſuch innocence as Arpaſia poſſeſſed; and an earneſt hope that it might be in the power of the principal of that family to repair the error. This was but the prelude to one of the moſt brilliant offers of himſelf to her acceptance. He laboured, he ſaid, under the misfortune of knowing he had been once rejected; but as her reputation had ſuffered in the opinion of an ill natured world, could ſhe have it ſo effectually reſtored as by being announced to that world the Counteſs of Carberry? What malevolent tongue would dare, under ſuch a ſanction, whiſper its aſperſion, when ſo inconteſtible a proof of its fallacy had been given?

given? He begged her to weigh this circumſtance properly, and he flattered himſelf her good ſenſe would urge her to decide favourably for him, which would make him the happieſt of men; as he truſted he ſhould, by the moſt exalted affection and attention, conſtitute her eaſe and tranquillity likewiſe.

ARPASIA could not one moment heſitate about the anſwer ſhe ſhould ſend to his lordſhip. It was compriſed in the politeſt terms of rejection, with a ſolemn aſſurance that ſhe ſhould never alter her ſtate, that ſhe had long fixed on the plan ſhe ſhould purſue in a very few weeks; her retirement and little conſequence in the world would ſoon make it forget the harſhneſs of its cenſures, as it was but too much to be feared other objects equally innocent with herſelf would give food for the voice of detraction. In the conſciouſneſs of her own rectitude ſhe ſhould ſeek conſolation; but never could find it in an act, which, as her heart could not coincide in, her ſenſe and reaſon muſt condemn.

THE vanity of the Earl of Carberry had really filled him with the hope that

Arpaſia could not reſiſt ſo flattering an overture at this time; he fancied he knew the world, and women in particular, forgetting from what ſchools he had drawn his learning; he knew what the human mind was when it was debaſed; in its ſtate of innocence and nature he was totally ignorant how much it exalted the ſoul; his refinement or delicacy would not have been hurt by her ready acceptance of his offer; and from the well know depravity of a vitiated heart, it is much feared that to gratify his paſſion, which, even for an Arpaſia, was merely perſonal and ſenſual, he would not have ſcrupled to have ſecured the poſſeſſion of her, though the cruel report of an amour with his ſon had been founded in truth. How mortified then muſt ſuch a man be at the ſteady refuſal this outcaſt of fortune had given his hopes and ſuperb offer of himſelf?

STILL deeply enamoured, he knew not how to give over his purſuit; he even attempted not to conceal from his ſon his trial, and the ill ſucceſs of it; he pretended it was out of zeal to eſtabliſh her character, but with an affected candour owned his firm attachment to her.

Lord

Lord Derville heard him with all the agony that man could feel. How did he feel himſelf revived when his father repeated her fooliſh reſolution, as he called it, of remaining for ever ſingle. It could not be, unleſs ſhe had met with ſome ſevere diſappointment in love; and then, ſilly girls who imagine their hearts were formed but for the admiſſion of one lover, generally make ſuch vows, which like many others are "more honoured "in the breach than the obſervance."

THERE is a ſpark in the heart of man that is never extinct: It is *hope*; it follows our footſteps, "nor leaves us when "we die." This latent ſpark the intelligence of Lord Carberry blew into a gentle flame in the breaſt of his ſon. He could not but hope that the many offers Arpaſia had rejected had ſome other ſource than mere indifference to the lovers that had made the overtures—Every look of eſteem, every word of kind attention that had beamed from her lovely eyes, or fallen from her beauteous lips, were now preſent to the memory of Lord Derville. Oh! there was extacy in the thought that ſhe reſolved to live

ſingle, perhaps for him! Could he but now and then ſee her, if only once a month, how would the time glide imperceptibly away that was between. As ſoon as his eyes had loſt ſight of her, they would fix on that point of time that would once more bleſs them with her loved view, and nothing elſe would they ſee. His ears, that had drank in the ſound of her heavenly voice, would be deaf to every other, till that again reſtored the ſenſe of hearing, with the true enjoyment of it. His heart that beat only for her—no, that would ſtill continue its vibration, and when it ceaſed to glow and pant for her—Oh! might its movements be ſtopped for ever! Thus did he fill his mind with deluſive ideas—giving way to hopes that his ſituation could not authorize; and ſtrengthening a paſſion which that ſituation rendered diſhonourable to a woman of virtue to have inſpired. Nor, I fear, was Arpaſia totally free from the imbecillity of entertaining a more tender ſentiment than friendſhip for his lordſhip. It might be truly ſaid of her, "ſhe pin'd in thought." "She never told her love." She dared not

not even whiſper it to herſelf. What, love a married man! Oh, what a world of woe was comprized in that one word! 'Twas true, he was to her idea in the poſſeſſion of all the virtues; his heart, his ſentiments ſo perfectly coincided with her own—Though interdicted by his ſituation from encouraging hope, yet might ſhe not without a crime revere the ſenſe, the worth, the numberleſs good qualities he poſſeſſed? He too, like her, had been an innocent ſufferer; was it reprehenſible to pity him? And, though ſhe never, never muſt ſee him again, were the tears that followed ſo bitter a reflection guilty ones? Deprived for ever of his pleaſing converſe, might not the memory of it ſtill remain? Might not the ſentences of purity and truth that received additional force from the lips that uttered them, might they not be cheriſhed in her heart to ſoften the ſolitary hours in which ſhe muſt paſs her life, without corrupting that integrity which they had ever recommended? Where could be the danger, where the crime, if ſhe erected a monument for his virtues in her boſom, and ſometimes watered

watered it with her tears? If to his worth ſhe ſanctified all her thoughts, and collecting them in one point, ſhe ſuffered her mind to be wholly engroſſed by them, reaſon told her ſhe was doing wrong. She could not ſhut up her heart againſt the cries of the poor, and the diſtreſſes within the limits of her power to redreſs —nor would ſhe—but when in the day ſhe had wiped the drops of ſorrow from ſome one's cheek, might ſhe not in the ſtill hour of night indulge her own unreproved by conſcience? She hoped ſhe might—for ſhe too plainly felt, thus ſhe ſhould ſpend many, many hours multiplied to days, weeks, and months—nay, her whole life; for what could ever alter her opinion of him!

WHAT indeed! Who, but himſelf could have ſtrength to have torn down the fabric, and broken the heart in which the corner ſtone had fixed its centre?—Who, but himſelf could have defaced the image of purity, which, with the eye of faith ſhe beheld in the temple of virtue, and called it by his name? Who, but himſelf, could have taught her to feel that memory was the bittereſt of all curſes;

curſes; and to *forget*—the hardeſt of all ſciences? There was but one, one little ſpeck of white to chear her future days—and none but he—no, not the combination of the whole world beſides, could have had power to cloud it over. He, in one moment, drew a ſable curtain before it—and ſhut it from her view for ever and for ever!

CHAP.

CHAP. XLVIII.

The Overthrow of Air-built Felicity.

IN leſs than a week from the time that Arpaſia had anſwered Lord Carberry's letter, another was brought her, to the handwriting of which ſhe was a ſtranger.

LET the reader, if haply, young, tender, and from the rectitude of her own virtuous heart placing implicit confidence in the worth and integrity of another's—let her for one moment make the caſe of Arpaſia more immediately her own—and let her ſay what would be her feelings on peruſing ſuch a letter!

"IN what words ſhall I addreſs my "angelic Arpaſia—how explain the ar- "dent wiſhes of my heart—and how "teach the moſt adored of women to "feel compaſſion—Oh! more than com- "paſſion and pity, to feel the inclinati- "on of according with my ſentiments? "—Oh! moſt lovely, moſt beloved Ar- "paſia—how has my heart been torn "with anguiſh ſince that unhappy day "we parted—Never to ſee each other a- "gain!

" gain! But who has inflicted ſo cruel a
" decree? — The world's cenſure? —
" What have we to do with it?—Are we
" not innocent?—Should we then be in-
" flicted with thoſe evils the guilty alone
" ſhould ſuſtain?—Oh! beloved of my
" heart—Dear as the vital drops which
" iſſue from it, why am I ever to be de-
" barred thy loved preſence?

" My father related to me the ill ſuc-
" ceſs which his overture received from
" you—He was not likely to ſucceed,
" though he bears his diſappointment
" with grief of heart. Forgive me that
" I reckon up the liſt of thoſe unfortu-
" nate men you have within theſe four
" months rejected—Forgive me too, for
" treaſuring up in my own mind the ſoft
" idea, that I am not hateful to you—
" Your friendſhip, your confidence have
" hitherto conſtituted all the comfort of
" my life. Oh! they may do more—they
" may make me the moſt bleſt of men!

" My wife! ſhe is no more my wife,
" ſince her infamy is too atrocious not to
" be noticed in a proper manner—I have
" inſtituted a proceſs, that I hope will
" end in a divorce—But the forms of

" law

" law are tedious and life too ſhort, too
" inſecure, to date our felicity from any
" remote period.—I hardly dare to men-
" tion my propoſal—Yet death is in the
" thought of delaying it—Oh! that my
" lovely Arpaſia burnt with an equal
" flame;—that her heart would vibrate
" at the extatic hope that now fills mine;
" then ſhe would ſpare her adoring Der-
" ville the pain of uttering his wiſhes—
" would but my ſweet maid conſent to
" ſhare my deſtiny, I care not in what
" part of the globe the reſidence is made
" —I have ſtruggled, but cannot live
" without you—As ſoon as ever the law
" allows me liberty to beſtow it in reality
" on you, the name of Derville ſhall be
" yours—till then—no matter what name
" we are called by, if I can preſs you to
" my faithful heart and call you its dear
" poſſeſſor—and you will ſweetly bluſh-
" ing own that I have a ſhare in yours!

" LET us not, my beloved angel, ſa-
" crifice our real happineſs to too nice an
" idea of what the world calls propriety
" --The union of hearts is the firſt princi-
" ple of marriage—the uniting hand is
" nothing without the former, our hearts

" will

" will be married—and our hands ſhall
" be ſo, whenever my firſt unfortunate
" engagement is diſſolved.—I will not
" aſk you to write—for I own I dare not
" truſt your reaſon to this affair—I will
" come to you next Wedneſday—I will
" plead my cauſe with all the energy that
" love can urge—Oh! loveliest, deareſt
" Arpaſia, be propitious, be favourable
" to the ardent wiſhes of your

" Ever, ever faithful DERVILLE."

ARPASIA had only glanced her eye to the bottom when the name—moſt dear—made her whole frame tremble—the three firſt lines cauſed a palpitation of heart—ſhe ſoon condemned as ſhe proceeded—horror and amazement ſtruck her mind—her head turned giddy—A ſickneſs, a miſt came before her eyes—ſhe ſunk with her face on a table ſhe was ſitting by—Her ſenſes for ſome moments fled from her—Recovering by degrees, the fatal phantom which the letter had conjured up, returned again to her viſion—She turned in diſguſt from it—Nothing could have induced her to go through ſuch a letter but to convince her ſenſes that it was not all an illuſion—

" Oh!

"Oh! that it had been!" ſhe cried—"Oh! that my eyes had cloſed in ever-"laſting night before they had peruſed "it!—Oh! that I had died an hour "ago, when I fooliſhly thought him "the moſt faultleſs of God's creatures "—then had my life been happy, and "my end had been peaceful."

TILL this moment ſhe never thought ſhe had known misfortune but by name—Now every one that human nature ſuſtains crowded on her at once, and overwhelmed her in their weight. Now how bitter were her tears!—Now how ſhe accuſed herſelf of fondly dwelling on his image! Oh! how was ſhe puniſhed!

IT was now Tueſday morning—on the next day he propoſed coming—A whirl of thought ran through her brain with incredible ſwiftneſs—What could ſhe do?—How conduct herſelf?—How avoid him?—To ſee him; ever again to behold him would be worſe than death—What he! on whom all her confidence had been placed to dare inſult her with ſo diſhonourable a propoſal!—Could it be poſſible?—How had ſhe been

been deceived!—But this was loſing time, the preſent moment muſt be given to action—for deliberation ſhe ſhould have full time by and by—In a minute ſhe went to Mrs. Travers, telling her ſomething of the utmoſt importance called her away. That ſhe would do herſelf the honour of writing to her in a few days, but that the occaſion was too preſſing to admit of delay—Mrs. Travers was ſorry to part with her agreeable companion, but politely acquieſced without thoſe painful enquiries which ſome people from a miſtaken notion of friendſhip perplex their acquaintance with, when it is out of their power to give a ſatisfactory account, and yet are unwilling to appear myſterious—As ſhe appeared eaſy, Arpaſia hoped ſhe was ſo, and that ſhe gave her credit for having particular buſineſs, which as it did not concern her, ſhe thought not about.

Her next care was to ſend for a chaiſe, and aſſiſt Catherine in putting up her cloaths—All this was ſoon accompliſhed—but where ſhe ſhould direct the chaiſe to go, or which road to take ſhe knew not—She was a ſtranger to the

the country. Where then ſhould ſhe conceal herſelf?—She had heard London was the moſt likely place to elude the ſearch of any one—Indeed ſhe had no alternative, for ſhe knew not where elſe to hide her head—Melancholy thought!—The wide world was before her—but not a ſpot did ſhe know on the habitable globe where ſhe could reſide.

CATHERINE had lived with her from infancy—ſhe had received a good education for one in the lower claſs of life—and poſſeſſed moſt excellent principles—Arpaſia had the higheſt opinion of her, but there was a delicacy in her ſituation that precluded communication—To no one could ſhe have diſcovered the grief that preyed on her mind—She told her ſhe had particular reaſons for quitting Hornchurch for ſome time—And as her legacy would not become due, ſhe ſhould remain in town till it was paid—Should then take the opportunity of purchaſing in the funds, ſettling a correſpondence with her banker, and look out for ſome peaceful habitation wherein to paſs her days—Catherine was grieved to hear the final reſolution

of

of her lady; not that retirement was an irkſome ſituation to her, but that ſhe had always hoped Arpaſia would liſten to ſome of theſe grand offers, as ſhe called them, and by appearing with eclat in the world, mortify the Hanburys, who had ſo unjuſtly triumphed over her in gaining her eſtate.

ARPASIA took a polite leave of Mrs. Travers, and with her faithful Catherine ſet off ſhe hardly knew whither—as little too ſhe cared, provided ſhe was carried far away from Lord Derville—At Ilford ſhe diſcharged her chaiſe, and took a ſlight repaſt, being ignorant when ſhe got to London where ſhe ſhould find a lodging or any accommodation—She aſked her maid if ſhe knew any one that let lodgings—and yet if ſhe had, it muſt have been ſome one that the Derville family were known by. From Ilford to London her mind was harraſſed by a thouſand ſchemes—"Why will you not go to Lady Anne's?" Catherine enquired.

"I BELIEVE," anſwered ſhe, "her "ladyſhip is out of town, I cannot go "thither."

"thither." The very agitation of her ſpirits ſupported her, by preventing their ſinking.

It was late in the afternoon when they arrived at White Chapel church.—The poſt-boy aſked what part of the town he ſhould drive to? It was a queſtion Arpaſia could not readily reſolve—merely becauſe it came firſt in her head, ſhe ſaid, "Drive to Oxford-ſtreet"—He cracked his whip and ſet of—"Oh! "good Heaven!" ſhe exclaimed, "No, "that will not do. It is too near Port-"man-ſquare."

They both called to the boy, but the ſound of the carriage on the ſtones, and the rattling of others, prevented his hearing them.

In Lombard-ſtreet they met with a ſtop, when Arpaſia took the opportunity of bidding the boy go to Piccadilly inſtead of Oxford-ſtreet—He gave a ſignificant nod and whipped up his horſes almoſt into a gallop to ſhew his dexterity—They went on at a good rate till they came pretty near St. James's Church, when off flew one of the hind wheels and down came the chaiſe—It

was

was on the ſide where Catherine ſat, who was a good deal hurt. A crowd of people gathered round them; they were got out with ſome difficulty—It is well known how ſoon a number of idle gazers are preſently collected on ſuch an occaſion in the ſtreets of our metropolis—The accident, the fright, and the certain delay it would cauſe, hurried Arpaſia extremely—She ſaw too that Catherine was a great ſufferer. The events of the day had almoſt bewildered her mind; it was now getting duſk, and the circumſtance of not knowing whither to go, added to the confuſion of her brain—Some humane perſons had taken Catherine into a houſe, while Arpaſia was ſtanding gazing on the ſhattered vehicle, but her thoughts too abſorbed, too perplexed to know ſhe was doing ſo—"What is to become of me?" ſhe ſaid in an inward voice, and caſting her eyes up to heaven: when at that inſtant, at the other ſide of the way, ſhe plainly diſcerned Lord Derville—ſhe ſtarted—the fear of being ſeen by him now engroſſed every faculty; ſhe ran into the churchyard, haſtily croſſing into Jermyn-ſtreet—

ſtreet—ſhe ſtopped not, or looked behind her, but ſtill went on as faſt as ſhe could walk, without taking notice which way ſhe turned, or having any idea of danger from miſſing her way—She had ſome confuſed recollection about having ordered the chaiſe to Piccadilly, but ſhe knew not ſhe was there when the accident happened—ſhe only hoped as ſhe had walked ſome conſiderable time that the dreaded Lord Derville would be effectually prevented finding her—as ſhe could figure to herſelf nothing ſo wretched as ſhe ſhould be from ſuch a rencontre.

The remembrance of Catherine now returned to her imagination—ſhe ſtopped—ſhe ſtrove to collect her ſcattered reaſon—but found herſelf unequal to the taſk; terrified at the imbecillity of mind ſhe diſcovered, her eyes filled with tears—"Oh!" cried ſhe "how weak I am!"—Every one that paſſed, ſtared at her. Her elegant figure, the agitation that was painted in her beautiful face, called their attention; but it was momentary—Every one took up their opinion, and went on their way—She went

on

on too—but without knowing where her ſteps would lead her—She went up a kind of little ſquare, but to her great diſappointment found ſhe could go no further; on her returning back, ſhe recollected ſhe might take a Hackney coach or a chair—The thought relieved her, as ſhe might by driving to Piccadilly, happily find out where Catherine was—Pleaſed with her idea ſhe tripped lightly on, when a carriage drove up to the entrance of the place—and a lady deſcended from it. Arpaſia, paying little attention to her ſituation, had near been puſhed down by the horſes. The lady ſaw the circumſtance, and ſtruck with the intereſting appearance of Arpaſia, humanely went up to her to enquire if ſhe was hurt; when the extreme politeneſs of her countenance, and a wildneſs in her eyes, which were red with weeping, made her redouble the earneſtneſs of her addreſs.

"Oh! you are hurt—you are ill—
"My dear madam you look ready to
"faint.—Here, John, aſſiſt the lady in-
"to the houſe—Do, my ſweet young
"lady, give me leave to offer you ſome-

" thing—Poor thing! how ſhe trem-
" bles." The voice of pity and compaſſion, to one who but the moment before ſeemed ſeparated from the whole world, ſunk deep in the wounded breaſt of Arpaſia; ſhe made a thouſand acknowledgements, while her exceſſive agitation almoſt rendered them inarticulate—The lady of the houſe appeared the moſt benevolent of beings—" My
" dear madam," ſhe ſaid " to whom
" can I ſend?—where was you going
" to?"

THESE ſimple queſtions tortured Arpaſia to the ſoul—In thoſe few words were comprized all her miſery—" Who
" can I ſend to?" ſhe repeated—
" Where was I going? Ah! who was
" I going from?"—How cutting the reflections which aroſe from queſtions put with tenderneſs—a tenderneſs that ſeemed congenial to her own—Her tears flowed faſt, though with hyſteric ſymptoms—It was a long time before ſhe could relate the circumſtance of her chaiſe breaking down—and her having met with ſomething that alarmed her, even more than the accident, and occaſioned

ſioned her wandering out of her knowledge, ſhe being almoſt a ſtranger in London—Servants were immediately diſpatched to enquire where ſuch an accident had happened—the miſtreſs of the houſe begged her to compoſe herſelf. "And do my dear," ſhe added, "be "thankful that you have fallen into "good hands—I will not loſe ſight of "you till you are replaced with your "friends. Good God! what might "have been your ſituation if you had "wandered about much longer?"—In ſhort, nothing was omitted to ſooth the diſtreſſed mind of Arpaſia—The night was now advanced, and no information could be gathered; at the earneſt requeſt of the lady, Arpaſia conſented to go to bed, for which purpoſe ſhe was ſupplied with every accommodation from her new friend—The viciſſitudes of the paſt day could not be ſhut out by darkneſs—In full force they returned to the diſturbed mind of Arpaſia—Her brain turned giddy, and in the language of Young, ſhe might be ſaid to

"Elaborate a bleſſing from deſpair,"

For the violence of her feelings at laſt rendered her inſenſible of them and every thing elſe. In the morning ſhe was light-headed and in the higheſt paroxiſm of a fever.—The enquiries were now ſuſpended in the fears for her ſafety—A phyſician of eminence was called in, and every other aſſiſtance adminiſtered with the utmoſt care; in a few days, a good conſtitution and good attendance left nothing but weakneſs remaining; though her mind now began to feel with its full force the hapleſs ſtate ſhe was in, and the cruel uncertainty of diſcovering where Catherine was, and whether ſhe had met with the almoſt unexampled kindneſs herſelf had experienced—Again every enquiry was ſet on foot, and the lady propoſed advertiſing as the readieſt means—Arpaſia drew up a few lines which would be ſufficiently intelligible to her maid, if it was ſo lucky to meet her eye; to which the lady added the place where the advertizer was to be met with, and gave her ſervant directions to carry it to the printer of the Morning Herald.

To

To reſtore peace to the mind of our heroine, her good friend took every occaſion of varying her amuſements, and rendering the tedious hours of ſuſpenſe leſs painful—She ſeemed a woman of liberal education, and though no longer young, the remains of beauty were viſible—She had a manner inſinuating, and likely to conciliate the heart of ſo artleſs a being as Arpaſia—She preſſed on her a thouſand accommodations, which, however, nothing could prevail on her to accept.—There were drawers full of every change of dreſs for her uſe—The moſt coſtly wines, the moſt delicate eatables, with a profuſion of every thing that luxury could wiſh for—Theſe attentions rather gave pain to the gueſt, becauſe ſhe knew her inability to repay them, as her generous and grateful heart would have been inclined to do.

WITH her confinement and waiting for the advertiſement, with allowance for its being noticed, ſhe had now been an inmate of this houſe ten days—And ſhe was determined the next morning to ſally forth, in the carriage of her patroneſs, and not give over her ſearch

till ſhe had found out where it was the accident happened, and be led by that information to the place where Catherine was, together with her cloaths and ſome valuable things, which were now of the utmoſt importance to her—as from the faſhion and appearance of every thing about her, ſhe was aware that a pecuniary return would not be accepted or even proper to offer—In her own mind, then, ſhe had appropriated an elegant pair of pearl bracelets with diamond ſliders, which had been her mother's, and were of the fineſt kind, as a ſmall return for the kindneſs and protection ſhe had received in the time of abſolute need.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIX.

All is not Gold that glitters.

SORRY am I, for the honour of human nature, that on inveſtigation it too ſeldom happens that ſuch kindneſſes and hoſpitality as inſpired Arpaſia with the moſt grateful feelings, has any other ſource than that too common one of ſelf-intereſt. In one word however the meaning will be fully explained. The houſe in which the poor wanderer had met with ſo opportune an aſylum was ſituated in King's Place. Every claſs of readers has heard of ſuch a manſion. Happy are thoſe who know it but by name!

To acquire ſuch a prize the miſtreſs of the houſe thought no purchaſe ill beſtowed. Even in the hour of diſtreſs and terror ſhe diſcovered beauties of no common rate; now that health returned, the ſoft bloom on her cheeks gave a brilliancy to her features, which were formed to ſpeak the ſentiments of her ſoul, that rendered her doubly attractive.

THE facility, in this too licentious age, of female ſeduction had almoſt made a virtuous character in that houſe a miracle, that might have been formerly poſſible, but now ſcarce credible. To have really a freſh ſubject to introduce, and thrown into her hands by a lucky chance, filled the mind of this vile woman with the moſt flattering proſpect of gain. She had a friend to whom ſhe ever acknowledged herſelf under the higheſt obligations; and to whom, from the firſt moment the unſuſpecting victim was ſeated in her houſe, ſhe had devoted her. This valuable friend was no other than the noble Earl of Carberry. It will be eaſily conceived that the meaſures Arpaſia ſuppoſed they were purſuing with avidity, went no farther than was neceſſary to ſooth her mind, and preſerve it untinctured by ſuſpicion. Her poſitive reſolution of ſetting off the next morning in ſearch of Catherine, expedited the plan of the old lady; for, although ſhe well knew ſhe might manage ſo as to preclude all advantage to her viſitor from the enquiry, yet ſhe might gain information who it was to whom ſhe had been indebted,

ed, and thereby render the ſcheme ſhe had in hand more difficult, if not totally defeat it. Not a moment then was to be loſt. She addreſſed the following billet to his lordſhip:

"*My good lord,*

"AT length fortune has put it in my "power to attempt a payment of the "many obligations your lordſhip has, "from time to time, conferred on me. "By the moſt fortunate accident in the "world, one of the divineſt creatures I "ever beheld, has been under my roof "for theſe ten days. Be not alarmed at "that hint. Not a breath has blown on "her. She is all ſpotleſs purity. I will "not enter now into particulars. Come, "and own that of all the girls you ever "ſaw ſhe is the moſt lovely. I ſhall ex-"pect you with impatience. I cannot "much longer keep up the appearance "of virtue and goodneſs. Happy it is "for me that the town is ſo empty, and "that I was prevented from going down "with my numerous family to any of "the watering places. The firſt would "have excited ſuſpicion from the con-"courſe of company that frequent my

" houſe, and the laſt would have pre-
" vented my meeting with this delicious
" *morceau.*

" I am, my lord,
" Your lordſhip's
" Moſt devoted ſervant,
" *King's Place.*" " C— M.—"

THE ſervant, who carried this intelligence, was a ſtranger to the perſon of Lord Carberry, and being an ignorant fellow thought that he muſt be a young man. He ſaw a carriage with coronets ſtanding at the door, and a gentleman, much of his own age, ſtepping into it; without further enquiry he preſented the letter to him. Lord Derville, (for it was he, who had been paying a morning viſit to his father, then confined with a ſlight indiſpoſition) naturally concluding a letter delivered into his hand muſt be intended for him, never looked at the direction, but broke the ſeal, and began to peruſe it.

THE firſt ſentence ſerved not to alarm him, as he had frequently done ſervices to various perſons in indigent circumſtances—but the next puzzled him extremely,

tremely, which increaſed as he went on; when, looking at the ſignature, and ſeeing from whence it was dated, he was convinced there muſt be ſome miſtake. He ſhuddered, when on examining the addreſs, he read

"*To the Right Honourable*
"*The Earl of Carberry.*"

For a moment he deliberated how he ſhould proceed. He again read over the infamous ſcroll. "I will obey the ſum-"mons," ſaid he. "I will for once re-"preſent my father. But my purpoſe "ſhall be to ſecure and protect inno-"cence and virtue, if I really can find "ſuch qualities in King's Place."

His footmen were all aſtoniſhment, when on checking the ſtring he ordered the coachman to drive to Mrs. M—'s. It was a command they had never received from him. They laughed, and made their remarks on the alteration in their lord, congratulating themſelves on living more jovial lives, (ſince ſervants always adopt the vices of their ſuperiors) now that he had entered on ſuch a plan as going in broad day to King's Place!

This

THIS was the firſt day Arpaſia had walked into a front room; and it was only to change the air a little that ſhe did ſo. The window of the chamber was open, and ſhe by chance ſtopped one inſtant to look out of it. She ſaw Lord Derville alight from his chariot. She heard him direct his ſervants to go home. She had ſeen and heard enough—pale, trembling, and juſt ready to ſink in the earth, ſhe got back into the other room, and drank ſome water which kept her from fainting; but ſtill her terror remained.

MRS. M— was amazed to ſee the ſon inſtead of the father; and, with a conſtrained ſmile, aſked to what ſhe owed the honour of a viſit from Lord Derville, whom but once, and that at the diſtance of ſome years, ſhe had ever ſeen before under her roof?

"IT was impoſſible not to obey ſuch a "call of the houſe," ſaid he with a gay air, "and I ſhould hope in this buſineſs I "might be allowed to repreſent my fa- "ther with great propriety. You, my "dear madam, underſtand the *etiquette* of "your own dominions, as to introducti-

"on

" on and ſo forth. To my ſhame, I muſt " declare my ignorance. I hope, there- " fore, if I am doing wrong, that you " will place it to that account." In ſay- ing which, he put a ten pound note into her hand, gently preſſing it.

" INDEED, my lord," ſhe ſaid with a gracious air, and the utmoſt pleaſure brightening up her face—" I believe I " ſhall not account the miſtake an un- " fortunate one But how ſhall I ſettle " it with your father? I had promiſed " the firſt offering to him, and a pro- " miſe with me is ſacred."

" PHO! he can never know it; the " letter was delivered to me by accident. " Come, will you not introduce me. " You know I have loſt much time— " and I am anxious to repair my error."

" GOD bleſs your ſweet face!" ſhe cried, looking wantonly at him—" I " ſwear I think you as handſome as my " beautiful girl. Well, well, I muſt ſet- " tle it with my conſcience, ſome how " or other, about jockeying my Lord " Carberry. I hope the merit of hav- " ing converted the ſon will atone for " the ſin of having cheated the father.

" And

"And certainly her age, for I do not "think her more than eighteen, will ſuit "your twenty-three better than his fif-"ty-two. But ſome management is ne-"ceſſary in this buſineſs, for I muſt tell "you how I met with her." She then began torelate to him the circumſtances already known to the reader.

THIS converſation, though it confirmed Lord Derville in his ſentiments of preventing the deſtruction of an innocent victim, thrown by chance into the power of this harpy, he could have no preſentiment that it was his adored Arpaſia.

THE poor ſoul was in the moſt cruel agitation. She liſtened almoſt breathleſs if ſhe could hear his voice below; and though ſhe dreaded nothing ſo much, ſhe wondered ſhe had not heard ſome meſſage from him. A maid ſervant at laſt came up to her, with the lady's requeſt ſhe would allow a gentleman, who wiſhed above all things to ſee her, to wait on her in the adjoining dreſſing-room. Arpaſia hardly allowed the woman to deliver her meſſage—"No, no, I cannot" ſhe cried, walking about the room in agony.

"HE

"HE is the ſweeteſt creature I ever "ſaw," ſaid the ſervant — "ſo hand-"ſome!"

"I KNOW it—I know it"—ſhe replied, not knowing at all what ſhe ſaid—"Pray, "my good girl," ſhe continued, recollecting herſelf, and taking half a guinea from her purſe—"do me the favour to "ſay I am extremely indiſpoſed—ſay I "have a return of my fever—ſay"—cried ſhe, clapping her hand to her forehead, and panting for breath "that I "am almoſt diſtracted"—which the wild look ſhe caſt, with the hurrying way of her ſpeaking did not contradict in the idea of the ſervant, who inſtantly carried the news to her miſtreſs—Diſappointment threw her off her guard, and with an oath ſhe declared ſhe would not long indulge her humour. Lord Derville interpoſed—He aſſured her he would not fail of calling the next day, and obtained her promiſe that no one but himſelf ſhould ſee her.

WHEN he was gone, ſhe immediately, in no very good humour, repaired to the room of Arpaſia—She found her exceſſively

ſively agitated though much relieved by a copious flood of tears.

FEARFUL of unravelling her character to her, too ſoon Mrs. M— aſked her, how ſhe could be ſuch a little perverſe chit to refuſe ſeeing a gentleman, who was going to preſcribe ſomething of advantage to her, and could have given her ſome information of her loſt ſervant.

"GOOD Heaven!" cried the deceived Arpaſia, "I thought it had been Lord "Derville."

"Do you know my lord then?" demanded Mrs. M— with ſurprize.

"OH!" anſwered Arpaſia claſping her hands together and burſting into a freſh flood of tears "Too well I do—It was "he who drove me from a ſheltering "roof—It is to him all my diſtreſs is "owing—I flew to avoid him, and what "might not have been the conſequence, "if in your likeneſs I had not met a "pitying angel?"

"So, ſo, then my pretty innocent," cried Mrs. M—, regardleſs of the delicate and grateful compliment in the latter part of Arpaſia's ſpeech, "this is what "may be called, a dead take-in. What,

"you

" you are an old acquaintance then of " his lordſhip's ?" ſhe aſked with a quickneſs of voice, and her air ſo changed, that Arpaſia looked all aſtoniſhment. — " and have palmed your- " ſelf on me, as a poor innocent virtu- " ous girl—and pray, my modeſt miſs, " how long did you live with him ?"

" I WAS a viſitor at his houſe, madam," replied Arpaſia, drawing back from her, " —till—I am ſorry to ſay—yet it is " too well known, the miſconduct of " Lady Derville made it neceſſary to " remove from thence."

" AND pray," returned the other, " what cauſe could you have to refuſe " ſeeing his lordſhip—or indeed any " body I wiſhed you to ſee ?"

" I CANNNOT underſtand," replied Arpaſia, with a cold, but rather reſolute air, " why my refuſal of ſeeing any com- " pany, ſituated as I am, can have oc- " caſioned ſo great an alteration in your " behaviour to me—I will not, though " I have great cauſe of complaint a- " gainſt his lordſhip, believe that he " would deſcend to the meanneſs of a " falſhood ; yet without it, how he

" could

"could have induced you to hold ſuch "improper and incomprehenſible lan- "guage, I know not."

"I BELIEVE you are both made up "of falſhood, for my part"—was the rude anſwer.

ARPASIA felt a ſpark of indignation riſe, but ſhe repreſſed it—and told her —"ſhe was ſorry that the obligations "ſhe had received, and which ſhe had "hoped ever to retain the memory of "with gratitude, ſhould in part have "been ſo cancelled."

"CANCELLED! No madam, do not "think ſo, I beſeech you—I ſhall take "care to have the obligation repaid, I "give you my word, before we part."

ARPASIA was thunderſtruck!

MRS. M—went on—"And let me "inform you too, madam, that I expect "you to behave very differently when "my lord comes to morrow."

"NEITHER to morrow, or ever will "I ſee Lord Derville," ſaid Arpaſia, whoſe anger was now very juſtly raiſed from the inſolence of the demand.

"I WONDER how you will help "yourſelf?"

"WHAT

"WHAT power can oblige me?" aſked Arpaſia—"Before to-morrow, "madam, I ſhall ſeek out ſome place, "from whence I ſhall hope to receive "that intelligence of my ſervant and "cloaths, which I fear has not been "proſecuted with the zeal with which "it was offered."

STUNG with the reproof—and her wicked conſcience ſuggeſting that ſhe was found out, throwing her intirely off her guard, "I'll be d——d," ſaid ſhe "if you leave this houſe till I am "ſatisfied for all the expences I have "been at!"

"IN what houſe can I be," cried Arpaſia pale and trembling, "where ſuch "expreſſions can be uttered by any "thing in female ſhape? Be not alarm-"ed, madam, you ſhall be paid—am-"ply paid, for every thing—I am not "to be your priſoner, I hope." She put her hand in her pocket and taking out ſome money, though ſhe was ſo agitated as to be ſcarce able to ſtand, ſhe went up to her, "What is your de-"mand? I am ready to ſatisfy it—

"only

" only let me quit a houſe, the miſtreſs " of which, till within this hour, I " thought a benevolent angel."

" AND what do you think of her " now?" ſaid ſhe, with her arms placed a kimbo, and looking with a ſaucy ſtare in her face.

ARPASIA diſdained a reply — " For " Heaven's ſake, madam, repay your- " ſelf what I owe you—and let me be " gone"—ſhe held about five guineas in her hand, and motioned it towards her —The wretch gave her hand a toſs and threw the money on the floor, which ſhe aſſiſted not in picking up.

" I SHALL not accept of that paltry " ſum, I aſſure you," ſaid ſhe—" My " houſe is not kept by ſuch trumpery " doings."

" ONLY then ſay what you will have " me do?" cried Arpaſia impatiently, " and do not heap inſolencies on me " till I can bear them no longer."

" How curſed unlucky," ſaid the vile creature, " that my letter ſhould " fall in that canting puppy's hands in-

" ſtead

" ſtead of his father! The buſineſs " would have been half over, if my " Lord Carberry had come!"

THIS was much beyond the apprehenſion of Arpaſia—yet the name of Lord Carberry filled her with horror—She again requeſted to know what ſum would anſwer the demand.

" WOULD the devil had had you, " before I ever ſaw you!" ſaid the violent wretch—" I thought to have " made a thouſand of you at leaſt— " And now, after all my trouble, I ſhall " be chouſed at laſt—I again aſk you, will " you conſent to ſee Lord Derville— " or (if I get rid of his importunity, " which I ſhall try for,) my Lord Car- " berry."

" OH! my God," cried Arpaſia, throwing herſelf into a chair, " What " can all this lead to? Tell me in as few " words as you can, what I am to truſt " to, while my ſenſes remain to allow " me to act reaſonably."

" WHY then, in a few words, for I do " not like throwing away time for no- " thing—I ſhould have thought you " before

"before this might have underſtood "my meaning—Lord Carberry would "give one of his eyes to have you fond "of him."

"LORD CARBERRY! does he then "know where I am?"

"I UNDERSTAND you as little as "you pretend to do me," ſhe replied —"However, I muſt ſpeak plain, I "find; Can you want to be informed "that this houſe is kept for the re- "ception of ſuch gentlemen, as wiſh "for kind-hearted girls?—Now do you "underſtand me?"

"Oh! too well! too well!" cried Arpaſia, ſinking down in an agony of tears—and juſt fainting—"May I hope "that you will comply with the cuſ- "tom of the houſe?"

"MONSTER of impiety and wicked- "neſs," cried ſhe in a voice that made the wretch ſhrink within herſelf,— "Urge me not to do a deed of deſpe- "ration! I have offered you payment "for the expences I have incurred— "Let me know this inſtant what they "amount to—and detain me at your "peril!"

HER

HER manner impreſſed the vile M. with only a temporary fear—She ſtalked up to her—"I ſhall bring you "my bill preſently—I have humbled "haughtier ſpirits than yours many a "time—I will give you the alternative "of quietly ſubmitting, or on a refu- "ſal, and an inability to ſatisfy my de- "mand, I ſhall ſhew you the inſide "of a priſon"—ſaying which, ſhe walked out of the room.

HAD it not been for the interpoſition of Providence, Arpaſia would have been involved in ſtill more deplorable circumſtances—but happily the good ſenſe ſhe received from Heaven, ſtood her in the utmoſt ſtead—She had ſome bank notes about her, which ſhe was on the point of acquainting Mrs. M— with —who, had ſhe known the ſtrength of her purſe, would have encreaſed her demand ſtill higher, ſo as to render the payment impoſſible—Arpaſia in a moment ſaw the predicament in which ſhe was placed—and rightly judged that ſhe ſhould, in ſo well governed a city, have a much better chance by throwing herſelf on its laws, and conſequently

ſequently under its protection, than by remaining an hour longer at the mercy of ſuch a diſgrace of her ſex—She therefore ſuffered her to continue under the idea that five guineas was the whole of the money ſhe could at preſent command—and as to the diſgrace of priſon—ſhe weighed that as very light to the infamy of the houſe where ſhe at preſent was.

CHAP.

CHAP. L.

The Inſide of a Lock-up Houſe.

MRS. M— ſoon returned with a long bill, made up of a variety of items—together with the advice of a phyſician, apothecary, &c. — the whole making twenty-five pounds—"There," ſaid the brute—"it will ſink your purſe I fancy."

"SINK it indeed!" cried Arpaſia, ſighing, but continued with a degree of ſpirit—"I ſuppoſe you have been very "reaſonable in your charges, madam?" —This hint produced a hearty curſe in the groſſeſt language—Arpaſia could but lift up her eyes in amazement, that human nature in the ſofter ſex could be ſo debaſed by vice.

"HAVE you conſidered of my propo-"ſal?" ſaid Mrs. M—.

"IT required none!" was the anſwer.

"You are determined then to drive "me to extremities?—A priſon, I fancy, "will tame your proud ſpirit—I have a "bailiff ready to execute a writ on you, "if you do not conſent to my plan."

"As you pleaſe—I cannot pay a bill "of twenty-five pounds, with only a "fifth of the money—I have effects elſe-"where—but I cannot at preſent obtain "them."

"PRAY ſend Mr. Ward in—Here, "ſir, is a pretty lady who will neither "lead or drive—ſhe owes me this ſum of "money, and I have offered her a fair "opportunity of clearing with me, and "ſhe has the ſaucineſs to ſcorn me—"You and I are no ſtrangers to each o-"ther, Mr. Ward--You underſtand me?"

ARPASIA dreaded ſome infamous compact between them—felt all that ſpirit riſe which never forſook her on proper occaſions; looking at the ſheriff's officer with all the dignity of injured virtue—"And underſtand me too, ſir, that I am "an Engliſh woman of family—That I "claim the protection of the laws—If I "am inſulted by any of its inſtruments, "be ſure you ſhall all be called to a ſe-"vere account—I am your priſoner—"this lady tells you I am. Conduct me "to ſome place of ſafety, and I will "thank you—for here I feel myſelf in "danger."

"COME,

"COME, come, young lady," ſaid Ward—"you will have nothing to fear "from me—Thank God, I have ladies "of family, and gentlemen of family "too, very often at my houſe."

"IT is of no conſequence," ſaid Arpaſia, "let a coach be ſent for, I am "impatient to be gone."

"BUT you will be more impatient to "return, I believe, before the week is "out—what ſay you, Mr. Ward?—You "remember Patty Corbyn, aye, poor "thing! ſhe is as happy as the day is "long now."

THE coach was announced—A moſt joyful ſound to poor Arpaſia, who would have thought Newgate itſelf, preferable to the roof of ſuch a vile wretch. She affectedly wiſhed her a pleaſant ride. "Oh!" cried Arpaſia, "with what dif-"ferent feelings I quit your preſence, I "hope for ever, to what I ſhould have "done, had you been in reality what "you appeared! Miſtaken, guilty wo-"man! What felicity can the ruin of "thy own ſex be to thy heart when on "thy death-bed! When every one of "the poor deluded wretches ſhall lift up

" their voices, and imprecate curſes on " thy devoted head! And when the all- " righteous Judge ſhall denounce thy " ſentence!"

THE commanding figure and beauty of Arpaſia ſtruck an awe into the officer, who made twenty bows as he followed her to the coach. Happy was ſhe when ſhe got into it! She aſked where ſhe was to be carried?

" To his houſe, and a very good one " it was, where ſhe might have the beſt " of accommodations."

" AND how long am I to remain there?"

" WHY, if you do not get bail in " twenty-four hours, you will be carried " to Newgate."

" BUT will not paying the money pre- " vent the diſgrace of going to New- " gate?"

" CERTAINLY; but Madam M— ſays " you have it not to pay."

" I MUST endeavour to procure it."

WHEN they arrived at the officer's houſe in Carey-ſtreet, ſhe was ſhewn into a very decent room, only the bars at the window made her ſhudder; but ſhe inſtantly poured forth her thankful praiſes

to

to Heaven, for extricating her from the diabolical hands of Mrs. M—.

MR. WARD, who, though in his way a very good ſort of man, never forgot his own intereſt, reminded Arpaſia that ſhe had not dined; and deſired to know what he ſhould have the pleaſure of procuring her.

SHE thanked him with great ſweetneſs, but ſaid ſhe had no appetite. "No "appetite!" he grumbled, "but other "people can eat if you cannot."

"LORD bleſs me!" ſaid ſhe, "have "you not dined? Do not let me detain "you. I want no attendance."

"BY my ſoul, madam, you are very "comical, or elſe very ignorant. I can "ſee that with half an eye. Why, don't "you know as it is common for people "in ſuch places to call for ſomething, "whether they *chuſes* it or not."

ARPASIA, as he gave her credit for, was certainly very ignorant of the ways of the houſe; but begged him to pardon her want of knowledge, and order what he liked from a tavern.

"NAY, nay, madam, it ſhall never "be ſaid of Bob Ward, that he impoſed

"on a generous lady. I have that in my "houſe, though I ſhould not ſay it, as "good as ever you will meet with in a "tavern, let the next be where it will. "From the beſt madeira wine down to "right hollands. Shall I fetch you a "bottle."

"No, no—Why, yes—you may, if "you pleaſe."

"AYE, aye, I thought as how you "would come to. God bleſs you, ma-"dam. Why, you are as handſome as "an angel. Aye, aye, this is ſomething;" for Arpaſia, to conciliate his favour, put a guinea in his hand, bidding him let her have ſome coffee and bread and butter.

THEN, left to herſelf, ſhe began her deliberations on the manner of her proceeding. As to better lodgings for that night, it now being ſeven o'clock, ſhe could not think of. While ſhe was his priſoner ſhe knew ſhe muſt be ſafe; for he, being very communicative, had told her how much he was anſwerable for her appearance, unleſs bail was procured. She had pen and ink brought her; and ſhe drew up an advertiſement to be put that evening in the different papers, purporting

porting where ſhe could be heard of, and deſcribing her ſervant, and what ſhe could recollect of her boxes, &c. And, having placed our fair heroine in a ſafe, though not very eligible ſituation, let us return to Lord Derville, after his viſit to the King's Place manſion.

He poſſeſſed a ſufficient portion of knight errantry to feel very much intereſted in the fate of the poor young creature, who had fallen thus in the fangs of ſuch a harpy as M—, and a determination to purſue his ſcheme of extricating her, if on farther knowledge ſhe ſhould prove a girl of virtue, and not a decoy. Such too often thoſe women dreſs up, and inſtruct to enſnare the credulous, and this he was almoſt ready to ſuſpect from the character of the governeſs of the caſtle.

He went at five to dine with his uncle; and, as they were ſitting after dinner, Mr. Travers happened to mention ſomething that appeared in one of the morning prints a week before. It was relative to political matters. Lord Derville had not noticed it. A parcel of newſpapers were produced, and they each be-

gan examining them to find the paragraph; when the following advertiſement arreſted the ſight, and almoſt benumbed the ſenſes of his lordſhip—

"A Poſt-chaiſe brought down.

"The young lady who left Horn-
"church, Eſſex, on Tueſday the 4th
"of September inſtant, with her maid
"ſervant C. W. and who, by the acci-
"dent of the wheel of the chaiſe com-
"ing off in Piccadilly, near St. James's
"church, was ſeparated from her ſer-
"vant, is moſt earneſtly requeſted to
"ſend ſome intelligence to C. W. who
"remains at Mr. Wilſon's, a cheeſemon-
"ger, oppoſite the above church. The
"lady was dreſſed in a black cloth riding
"habit; black hat and feathers; neck-
"cloth, ruffles and frill, hemmed and
"welted cambrick; a gold-headed cane,
"with the cyphers A. H. Her perſon is
"extremely handſome, tall, ſlender;
"light brown hair, hanging in looſe
"ringlets on her ſhoulders, and large
"braid behind."

"My God!" exclaimed Lord Derville, "have you ſeen this advertiſe-
"ment?"

"ment?" But before Mr. Travers could look at it, he related to him the tranſactions of the morning, and the circumſtance of the letter to his father.

TRAVERS ſtarted up, with a violent exclamation declared it muſt be her. It could be no other than Arpaſia. But why ſhould ſhe leave my ſiſter Travers? He got no information from Lord Derville on that head; nor did he ſtay for it. He was all hurry and confuſion. Firſt he would go to the old brimſtone's, as he called her—then he would go to Wilſon's. The former ſcheme was adopted, becauſe ſending to Wilſon's for Catherine would anſwer no good purpoſe. Away then they poſted, and arrived at King's Place, about an hour after Arpaſia, together with her *chaperon*, had left it.

LORD DERVILLE prevailed on Mr. Travers to remain below ſtairs, as he thought his impetuoſity would rather retard than facilitate matters. He was ſhewed into a little drawing-room, where ſat a pretty girl, who ſeemed much delighted with his appearance, though her features changed when he coldly re-

plied, to her enquiry if ſhe could be ſo happy as to render him any ſervice, that his buſineſs was at preſent with Mrs: M—. But a female who has parted with the brighteſt jewel in her poſſeſſion, modeſty, cannot ſoon be repulſed. She caſt a moſt alluring glance at him, which affected him as much as if he had been blind. "Pſhaw!" ſhe cried, "what can "you want with an old woman? She "muſt certainly be the paſſport to the "youthful."

"EXACTLY ſo: That is the reaſon "why I wiſh to ſee her. You do not "infringe on one another's properties "I am certain. I am engaged to a "blooming beauty, who is but lately an "inmate of this manſion."

"I KNOW who you mean—but ſhe is "gone."

"GONE! where the devil is ſhe gone "to?"

"To learn her leſſon properly—in "the ſame ſchool where I was taught "mine."

THE old woman appeared at this moment. "Oh! my lord, is it you re-"turned again? Well, you had better "taken

"taken my advice, *and ſtruck while the* "*iron was hot*; for I never ſaw ſuch a "little determined fury in my life—I "warrant I bring her down."

"TAKE care what you do," cried he with a fierce tone—"You little know "who you have with you. She is one "of the beſt families of the kingdom, "and if you have injured her in the "tythe of a hair, the torments of hell "will not be hot enough for you. Where "is ſhe? Let me ſee her."

"I AM ſure I offered her no harm," anſwered the beldame a little frightened,—"To be ſure I told her ſhe ſhould pay "me for my trouble and expence, and "your lordſhip may think it was no ſmall "ſum. Indeed I ſhould not have mind-"ed it of a ruſh—for, thank God and "good friends, I have a pretty income. "But ſhe was ſuch an obſtreperous crea-"ture there was no doing quietly with "her. Why, what could be more civil "than my meſſage on your account? "No; ſee you!—no; that ſhe would "not! never as long as ſhe lived."

"SEE me!" cried he impatiently—"You did not tell her it was me?"

"WHY,

"WHY, how ſhould I know you was "acquainted with her?"

"AND when ſhe heard my name, did "ſhe refuſe to ſee me?"

"OH! I have not words to tell you "half ſhe ſaid; ſuch a tragedy rant I "never heard out of the garden. It was "to *you* ſhe owed all the evil and diſtreſs "ſhe was now labouring under. To "avoid *you* ſhe had encountered all "theſe hardſhips, and ſtill to avoid *you* "ſhe would go to priſon—and ſo ſhe "is—that is to the ſheriff's officer."

"To priſon!—To avoid me!—Oh! "my beloved Arpaſia, what have you "ſuffered! What have I done to incur "ſuch diſpleaſure!"

HE ran down half diſtracted to his uncle; who, in a moment, was in as great a phrenzy as himſelf. He was for ſetting fire to the houſe, and blowing the miſtreſs of it to the devil. "Oh! "for heaven's ſake," cried Lord Derville, "loſe no time now, do go to the "dear unhappy creature. What preju- "dice ſhe can have taken againſt me I "know not; but while ſhe is influen- "ced by it I will not appear before her.

"I will

"I will go to Catherine, and ſend her "to you." He then took proper directions to Ward's houſe, which he made Mr. Travers clearly comprehend, who drove immediately to Carey-ſtreet. He ran as faſt as he could to Wilſon's; where he found poor Catherine, who was almoſt heart-broken, and ſtill very ill from her bruiſes. She had fallen into the moſt humane hands in the world, who tried every method to conſole her, and to employ means of diſcovering the loſt Arpaſia, Catherine, who judged her lady had very particular reaſons for avoiding both Lady Anne and Lord Derville, thought there could be no uſe in enquiring at either of thoſe houſes. Ten days had now elapſed. She propoſed going out herſelf next day. The advertiſements had been repeated; and Mrs. M. had certainly ſeen them; but it being ſo much her intereſt to ſecret the circumſtance from Arpaſia, ſhe took care the papers containing it ſhould never come in her ſight. Catherine, who doated on her miſtreſs, wept like a child when Lord Derville aſſured her ſhe ſhould have the happineſs of ſeeing her

that

that evening. He took her in a hackney coach, with ſome linen, which Catherine thought would be very acceptable; ſhe not knowing how generous Mrs. M— had been, in that and every other attention to her, while ſhe had reaſon to flatter herſelf with an adequate return; though ſhe now filled the houſe with curſes and the moſt horrid blaſphemies at the fruſtration of her diabolical machinations.

CHAP.

CHAP. LI.

The Happy Meeting.

A BUMPER or two of madeira, unlocked the cells in Mr. Ward's heart, where his good nature lay, to be produced in ſmall parcels, as occaſion required—while he went for the bottle, Arpaſia ripped the lining of her riding hat, in which ſhe had concealed, for fear of being ſtopped on the road, all the valuable paper ſhe was poſſeſſed of, namely, two bank notes, one of twenty, the other fifteen pounds.

WHEN Mr. Ward returned, ſhe informed him, ſhe wiſhed to have a creditable witneſs or two, that he might not fall into any trouble, and then, before them ſhe would pay the ſum into his hands that Mrs. M—demanded—"I "could have done it on the ſpot," ſaid ſhe, "but I rather choſe to be in your "protection than in her power. You "will give me a receipt."

HE heſitated about it—It was late—and he knew not who he could get.—

"I do

"I do not mean to quit your houſe to "night," ſaid Arpaſia, "but to-mor- "row, you know, I muſt go to New- "gate if I do not get bail—or pay the "money—the laſt I can do."

"OH! Lord, madam, ſuch a pretty "lady as you, might get bail any hour "in the day—I'll lay my life, I could "name twenty that would gladly bail "you out, for the mere pleaſure of the "thing."

ARPASIA was glad to hear there were ſo many benevolent beings in the world —"But then ſurely you may find two, "who will witneſs your receipt?" ſhe ſaid—"Your wife—or any truſty do- "meſtic."

THE receipt was juſt ſigned, and wit- neſſed, and the note and money depo- ſited in Mr. Ward's canvas bag, when word was brought up by one of the runners, that a gentleman begged to ſee the young lady directly—"Oh! for "Heaven's ſake, do not admit him," cried Arpaſia—"I cannot, I will not "ſee him."

"WHAT kind of gentleman is he?" cried Ward, who was unwilling to turn away a gueſt.

"AN

"AN oldiſh ſort of a man," ſaid the runner, "wears his own grey hair—"and ſays his name is Travers."

"TRAVERS!" repeated Arpaſia, while a beam of tranſport ſhot from her eyes that made her even to her preſent companions, almoſt too dazzling to behold, "Oh! let me ſee him this mo-"ment!"

IN an inſtant the good old man ran up the narrow ſtairs—Arpaſia ſprung to him. His arms extended to receive her, ſhe ſunk into them and fainted.

"OH! my beloved angelic child!" cried the old man, while the tears followed each other in large drops down his venerable cheeks "are you at length "reſtored to me?"—She ſoon recovered herſelf—and Mr. Travers ſeeing the bottle, poured out a glaſs and obliged her to drink it off. When left to themſelves, he earneſtly enquired why ſhe had left Hornchurch without apprizing any of the family with her intentions?—The queſtion brought tears into her eyes—ſhe roſe and walked away to conceal them—At laſt ſhe aſſumed courage to ſpeak.

"MY

"My reſolution, my dear ſir, was "formed on a cauſe that appeared to "me abſolutely neceſſary—I could not "act different from what I did—what "that reſolution originated in, I muſt "beg your permiſſion to conceal with-"in my own breaſt—I am convinced, "were I at liberty to inform you, I "ſhould have your acquieſcence in it."

"I am convinced," ſaid he, "of "your prudence, but what a dreadful "dilemma you got in by it—Thank "Heaven you have eſcaped your dan-"ger!"

"Oh! ſir," ſhe cried, "my heart "has moſt devoutly acknowledged the "mercies of heaven which has ſo often, "and ſo ſignally preſerved me."

"But, my ſweet girl," he replied, "how is it my nephew has offended "you?—For I find by that old harri-"dan, that you came here to avoid him."

"I could ſee no man with ſafety in "her infamous houſe," ſhe anſwered, with ſome heſitation, "and circum-"ſtanced as I have been, to ſee Lord "Derville at all, muſt be improper."

"But now, in my preſence, for a "few minutes to ſee him would not be "ſo—

" ſo—He thinks he has offended you—
" he is miſerable."

" I AM ſorry for it—Lord Derville, no
" doubt, can well account for the reaſon
" why I decline ſeeing him now, or ever
" —It is painful for me to refuſe any
" thing to my good Mr. Travers; but if
" he will allow me to adhere to my reſo-
" lution, and give me credit for having
" ſufficient reaſon, without urging me
" to explain myſelf, he will increaſe my
" eſteem for his valuable character—
" Lord Derville muſt be conſcious to
" himſelf, that my reſolution ought to
" be invariably preſerved."

MR. TRAVERS could make nothing of this, and thought it better to leave it to time to clear up any miſtake—and indeed there was no time for it, for Catherine, without any ceremony, ran into the room and claſped her beloved lady in her faithful arms.—It was now late, and Mr. Travers retired, leaving the miſtreſs and maid to themſelves; though it was painful for Lord Derville to quit the houſe without ſeeing Arpaſia, he reſpected her ſituation, as to body and mind too much, to ſeek a diſturbance of either.

MR.

MR. TRAVERS's carriage conveyed Arpaſia to Mr. Wilſon's, where ſhe ſoon went to bed—but as her ſpirits were yet unſettled, ſhe got little reſt—She roſe very early, and finding Mrs. Wilſon had a widow ſiſter that lived at Hendon, in Middleſex, ſhe agreed for a lodging with her; and by nine in the morning, ſhe and Catherine again began their peregrinations.

SHE rewarded the humane Wilſons, for their great attention to her ſick maid —and exacted from them both a moſt ſolemn promiſe, which they ſtrictly adhered to, not to diſcloſe to any enquirers which way ſhe had bent her courſe.—She could not however acquit herſelf of ingratitude, without writing to Mr. Travers, which ſhe did before ſhe left town, but gave him no clue whereby her future reſidence could be diſcovered.

MR. TRAVERS urged Lord Derville ſtrongly, concerning the nature of the offence he had given Arpaſia—but he averred with the utmoſt appearance of ſincerity, that he was wholly unconſcious what it could be, though he ſhould ever lament the effect which proved ſhe had

had loſt her confidence in him—A man, although not of depraved principles, is both from cuſtom and education, infinitely more free in his notions than a delicate woman, who, from her particular ſituation, was even more delicate than nature had left her.—Therefore the conduct which made him ſo reprehenſible to the eyes of Arpaſia, might not ſtrike him in that light—Be this as it may, he certainly never ſpoke of the circumſtance of the letter, which had driven Arpaſia from her ſanctuary, and had by its conſequences, ſo nearly plunged her in deſtruction.

CHAP.

CHAP. LII.

A Calm after a Storm.

THE ſtate of Arpaſia's mind may be very aptly compared to the ſituation of the ocean, which had lately been ſhook by a violent ſtorm; but which, as the fury of the winds ſubſided, ſunk into a calm, but ſtill continued agitated with its former extraordinary exertions.—The tempeſt which had nearly ſhattered her little bark, had indeed blown over, but the ſwelling of the waves ſtill continued, and the remembrance was too painful not to inflict the utmoſt anguiſh, when memory, ever induſtrious to torment, brought the events of her momentous life to her view.

THROWN from the height of grandeur and affluence, which ſhe was ſo well adapted to adorn and dignify, to very moderate circumſtances, for on a calculation of her neceſſary diſburſements, ſhe found ſhe ſhould have but barely enough to ſubſiſt her till the fifth of October, when her little legacy became due. Once too,

the

the delight of every one who knew her —now in an obſcure corner knowing no one—known by no one—her reputation injured by the cruel ſuſpicions of her whom ſhe had held next her heart ſo many years; but above all, that reputation inſulted by the man, whom to have ſtill looked on as her friend and protector, would have ſweetened every other calamity of life; there all her philoſophy, her reaſon and religion were barely ſufficient to ſupport her—to be permitted to eſteem him, without condemning herſelf had been the hope, the all of comfort ſhe aſked in this world—That felicity was now over, and that ſhe ſhould be able to forget him for ever, was now the moſt prudent wiſh her wounded heart could form.

In this retired village, ſhe determined to begin ſo neceſſary a taſk, an arduous one ſhe knew it muſt be—for recollection would too frequently repreſent to her imagination, what ſhe once partially thought him, not in the character his own letter had given him; that letter ſhe would never deſtroy, it ſerved to ſtrengthen her reſolution, and harden her

her heart againſt an impreſſion that had taken deeper root, than ſhe at firſt had any idea of—She hoped that when ſhe could tell herſelf he was unworthy her regard, he would of courſe ceaſe to be the object of it.—"He no longer eſteems "me," ſhe cried—"He could not eſteem "the woman who he laboured to debaſe "—What is then the paſſion I have in- "ſpired?—A ſenſual inclination that "ſought its own gratification, at the ex- "pence of the honour, the peace, the "ruin of the object—Why do I not tear "his image from my heart?—Why does "my too fooliſh memory preſent to me "times paſt, when the utmoſt delicacy "governed every movement, every "word? When he even ſought not to "lay claim to my friendſhip?—Ah! "that might be all artifice, at leaſt it is "better for my peace of mind that I "ſhould think ſo."

CATHERINE had the higheſt opinion of her miſtreſs, and the moſt implicit confidence, that whatever ſhe did, was right. Actuated then by theſe principles, ſhe preſumed not to think ſhe was acting wrong now; or did ſhe ever by the leaſt hint

hint urge Arpaſia to diſcloſe her real ſentiments.—She reſpected the ſorrow with which ſhe frequently ſaw her overwhelmed, and tried by a thouſand little ways, which the grateful heart of Arpaſia was fully ſenſible of, to divert her attention from gloomy ſubjects—As ſhe knew her lady was particularly fond of children, ſhe would often ſelect ſome of the prettieſt from the neighbouring cottages, and preſent them to her—Their innocent diſcourſe and playfulneſs, would frequently arreſt the melancholy oppreſſion of her heart—beſides, ſhe ſaw the good deſign of her ſervant, and ſhe would exert herſelf to reward the friendly intention—Her native benevolence was a principle that although reſtrained by circumſtances, never died, or indeed ſlept—She viſited the cottages, taught the children—preſcribed for the ſick, and performed numerous little acts of charity, which ſhe was happy ſhe could ſtill do, by retrenching every article of luxury, and ſimply boarding with the widow. From a meal of her wholeſome but coarſe fare, ſhe would riſe with a thankful heart, and feel the moſt exalted plea-

ſure, that the money which a chicken would have coſt, was beſtowed in ſome refreſhing cordial, or neceſſary cloathing for the ſick or naked.

MRS. WALKER regarded her as an angel for ſhe had heard from Catherine, who though very prudent, could not hold her tongue when Arpaſia was the theme, what a large eſtate ſhe had been born to, and what ſhe had ſuffered by treachery—To hear this of ſo young a woman, and to ſee her conduct under it, might well challenge the admiration of all who knew it.—Each day produced ſome more amiable *trait* in her character, and even in this little ſphere of action, Arpaſia ſhone as much, and as truly conſpicuous, as in the moſt exalted ſhe had ever experienced—The grateful incenſe of juſt praiſe was her portion, and it aſcended to Heaven, in the daily prayers of thoſe who experimentally felt the goodneſs of her heart.

CHAP. LIII.

An intereſting Diſcovery.

ARPASIA, on returning one day (when ſhe had been at Hendon about three weeks) to the frugal dinner of Mrs. Walker, from her accuſtomed walk to the cottages, learnt from Catherine, the good woman had juſt ſet off for London, having received by the poſt a letter which had thrown her into the utmoſt ſorrow.

"OH! why was I not here to have "ſoothed her if poſſible!" exclaimed the tender-hearted Arpaſia. "Can you tell "of what nature it was?"

CATHERINE told her ſhe could learn nothing but from her tears and lamentations, as ſhe ſat out in a quarter of an hour after the letter came. She had happily got a caſt to town in a higler's cart, and ſhe informed Catherine ſhe ſhould return in the evening of the next day. In this ſuſpenſe they were obliged to remain, though the hours appeared doubly tedious to our heroine, who made the ſufferings of every one ſo much her own,

as to feel anxious till ſomething could be done to relieve them.

EARLY in the afternoon the good woman arrived at her little dwelling, after a long walk from Kingſton upon Thames. Arpaſia blamed her for not taking ſome conveyance; the poor ſoul burſt into tears—and ſaid, "when the heart is "broken with grief, the body and limbs "are not thought of. If it ſhould be "the cauſe of my death, I ſhould have "nothing to regret. I have outlived eve-"ry comfort and hope in life, and what "remains muſt be deſpair and infamy."

ARPASIA ſaid the kindeſt things to her, and urged her to repoſe her ſorrows in her boſom, if they were of a nature to communicate.

MRS. WALKER aſſured her they could not long be a ſecret to any body; and then, in all the agony which could tear a mother's boſom, informed her ſhe had been to ſee her only ſon, who now lay under condemnation for the crime of forgery in Kingſton jail. Arpaſia's heart bled for the diſtreſs ſhe ſaw the worthy creature labour under. She hoped he might be ſaved. Perhaps he was innocent.

cent. "Oh! not ſo," ſobbed out the ſorrowing parent; "I have the cruel re-
"flection of being too well aſſured he is
"guilty. To have ſuffered innocently
"would have blunted the arrow of death
"—but alas! my ſon, my ſon! Oh!
"I have had this dreadful proſpect hang-
"ing over my head for years, and cloud-
"ing the ſmall ſhare of comfort allotted
"me. How did I rejoice at his birth!
"How did I on my knees thank God
"for ſparing him to me, when in his
"wrath as I thought he deprived me of
"a beloved huſband, and three other
"lovely babes in the ſpace of one ſhort
"week! Oh! how chearfully I ſub-
"mitted to poverty, and never caſt one
"thought on the income I loſt by my
"huſband's death, as ſtill I could hold
"one, one dear pledge of his affection
"to my bleeding boſom! But to have
"him torn thus from me! To ſee his
"laſt breath expire in infamy, and
"brought to the gallows by ſuch guilt.
"Oh! what a cloſe of my days!"

"Oh! my God!" cried Arpaſia, "can
"nothing be done to ſave him? Have
"you no friends to apply to?"

"My poor ſon," ſhe anſwered, "told "me there was one gentleman, whom "he ſtill hoped great things from; tho' "he had written twice to him, without "having as yet got an anſwer. He gave "me a letter to put in the poſt; but as "I ſaw the name of the direction was "the ſame as yours, and I could loſe no "time by this little delay, I brought it "with me. Perhaps you, my dear ma-"dam, may know him; and a word "from ſuch an angelic heart as yours, "may have more weight than even my "poor wretched ſon's petition."

What were the feelings of Arpaſia, when Mrs. Walker put in her hand a letter addreſſed to

"*Richard Hanbury, Eſq;*
"*Hanbury Caſtle, Worceſterſhire.*"

The utmoſt aſtoniſhment ſeized her. A man under ſentence for forgery petitioning her uncle, whom ſhe too well knew had been guilty of many crimes, and many more imputed to him! To what a diſcovery might not this letter lead? What a whirl of thought it gave occaſion to. There was but the thickneſs of a wafer between her doubts and certainty.

tainty. By opening the letter ſhe might lay open a ſcene of villainy, by which ſhe had been involved in all her difficulties. "But by what right do I wiſh to "open this letter? Becauſe I am inter- "eſted moſt probably in the contents? "Am I then to juſtify myſelf by an un- "juſt action? No; forbid it, Heaven! "How know I ſufficiently the ſtrength "of my own heart and rectitude? Per- "haps the lives of many may depend on "my ignorance of theſe contents. Oh! "perhaps," cried ſhe, "my uncle, my "couſins, could I conſign them to death? "No—let them ſtill enjoy their ill-got- "ten wealth; while with a clear con- "ſcience I welcome poverty. If it is "the will of Heaven that their iniquity "ſhall be diſcovered, the Almighty will "bring it about without wounding my "heart by an action too reprehenſible in "my own eyes to obtain my forgiveneſs "of myſelf." She again put the letter in the hand of Mrs. Walker. "Let it "be inſtantly ſent," ſaid ſhe, "the per- "ſon is my uncle, and now living in the "houſe where I firſt drew breath. My "name, however, would do the cauſe of

" your ſon no good with Mr. Hanbury.
" We are not on good terms together."

CATHERINE, when her lady left the room, was more explicit with Mrs. Walker. She lamented the too exalted ſenſe of honour which had influenced her miſtreſs in her conduct of the letter. " There is not a ſervant in the houſe," ſaid ſhe, " that does not believe the will " of the late 'ſquire a forged one. " There is nothing ſo bad which Mr. " Hanbury is not capable of doing. He " is ſuſpected of having ſhot the father " of dear Miſs Hanbury; and ſome " years before that, he made an infa- " mous attempt on the bed of his bro- " ther's wife. Oh! that I knew the con- " tents of the letter!" Poor Mrs. Walker ſhuddered at this relation; but, as ſtill ſhe hoped the preſervation of her ſon, ſhe could not but rejoice, and never-enough applaud the ſaint-like goodneſs of Arpaſia, as ſhe truly ſtyled it—for it certainly ſavoured ſtrongly of primitive Chriſtianity, to give away her cloak to the man who had taken her coat. But ſhe eſtimated the riches of the world as mere droſs, compared to the feelings

of

of her own mind; and had ſo lively a faith, that if it was beſt for her to be wealthy, Heaven would beſtow it on her, that ſhe reſted eaſy, and continued to abide in that Providence which had never yet forſaken her.

But not to ſhut her eyes to all conviction, and when Heaven preſented her a good to caſt it away from her with inſenſibility, ſhe refuſed not ſome days after to accompany Mrs. Walker in a viſit to her ſon, which he had requeſted with the utmoſt earneſtneſs, on hearing from his mother the heavenly character of his lodger, and above all, the thorough conviction that he muſt prepare for death; as Mr. Hanbury, who likewiſe knew nothing could ſave him, refuſed to uſe any means for his preſervation; and indeed had rather accelerated his deſtiny, by the repreſentation he made to the Judge who condemned him.

Catherine attended her lady and Mrs. Walker in a chaiſe from Hendon; after ſome little preparation from the mother, they were admitted to the preſence of the unhappy man, whoſe features were inſtantly recognized by Ca-

therine. She exclaimed, "I am ſure "I ſaw your face at the Caſtle ſome lit- "tle time before the death of the 'ſquire. "I will take my oath of it. You came "on ſome buſineſs to Mr. Richard Han- "bury."

"Oh! my dear, dear ſon," cried his mother, hanging on his neck—"for "Heaven's ſake diſcharge your conſci- "ence of its ſecret ſins, if you have "been the means of depriving this moſt "excellent lady of her property. To "this world it can make no difference. "You are too well convinced; and I "hope too reſigned to your fate; but "what is this ſpeck of time compared "to eternity? You may taſte the full- "neſs of joy for ever and ever, if by "your penitence and retribution here "you entitle yourſelf to the mercy of "an all-forgiving Redeemer."

"I do indeed repent of my crimes," ſaid he, "and feel the utmoſt conviction "that they will meet pardon. It was "on that account I intreated this angel "to viſit a poor condemned wretch in "priſon. Thank Heaven, I have it in "my power to reſtore her the eſtate,

"which

" which the wicked contrivance of one
" of the worſt of men, together with my
" execution of it, have deprived her of.
" Fate has at length overtaken my num-
" berleſs villainies. It has made an ex-
" ample of me. I yield to the ſentence
" of the laws which I have offended ſo
" grievouſly. And do you, my dear
" mother, unite your prayers with this
" bleſſed lady, whoſe eyes have borne
" ſuch teſtimony to my ſorrow, that I
" may meet with mercy from that Hea-
" ven I have too much neglected. Be
" comforted in the midſt of your afflicti-
" on, that time has been allowed me
" for repentance. I might have been
" cut off by accident before my guilty
" ſoul could have diſcharged itſelf of
" its ſinful account. Oh! Miſs Hanbu-
" ry, that will, under which your un-
" cle inherits the eſtates in Worceſter-
" ſhire, was forged by me, according
" to his directions. The true one he
" obtained on that day you met the ac-
" cident of having the boat upſet; and
" I much fear it was a premeditated
" ſcheme of your vile couſin, in hopes
" your life might be endangered, if not

" loſt

" loſt by it. By the circumſtance of
" your grandfather giving Mr. Richard
" his keys to fetch a particular cordial
" for you, he got poſſeſſion of a former
" will; and during your confinement I
" made another. I pretended to deſtroy
" the true one; but I preſerved it care-
" fully by me—Not, I own for any good
" purpoſe; but to have a check on
" him, and to be able to draw on him,
" whenever I ſhould have occaſion for
" ſecret money. I never had cauſe yet
" to make application to him, till ſince
" I was taken up for a crime of a ſimilar
" nature, having unhappily been tempt-
" ed to forge a letter of attorney, in or-
" der to receive a large ſum from the
" Bank. It was clearly proved, and I
" was condemned. Life is ſweet, and
" I conceived hopes from my old friend
" Hanbury, whom I have been connect-
" ed with before your birth. I uſed to
" be ſent down as a ſpy to the Caſtle
" very often, and from the intelligence
" I gave, he regulated his actions. I
" was down about a fortnight before the
" accident of your worthy father's
" death; and have no more doubt than

" of

" of my preſent exiſtence that your un-
" cle's hand deſtroyed him.

" HERE, madam," ſaid he, taking out a little caſe of green baize, " here " is the original will. I will beg of you " to bring ſome credible witneſs to a de- " poſition I mean to make, which ſhall " put the validity out of all diſpute."

ARPASIA could not but admire the goodneſs of Providence that had brought theſe events to light; on a conſultation they ſent for the Miniſter of the pariſh of Kingſton, requeſting him to witneſs the priſoner's account of the forgery. It gave a ſecret pleaſure to Arpaſia, to find her couſin Edward, who had ever been the greateſt favourite with her of the whole family, was entirely innocent and ignorant of the proceedings of his father. To him ſhe wrote that night—ſhe could not prevail on herſelf to correſpond with a monſter, who had deprived both her parents of exiſtence, ſince that of one ſo immediately followed, and was dependent on the other. She wiſhed not to bring matters to the worſt iſſue, and ſecretly hoped the information ſhe gave her couſin would reach the

Caſtle

Caſtle before the warrant (which without compounding felony ſhe was forced to conſent ſhould be taken out) was put in execution againſt her uncle. As ſhe found the company of the mother afforded the utmoſt conſolation to the condemned criminal, ſhe took a lodging at Kingſton for her, being herſelf accommodated in the ſame houſe. The Clergyman, a moſt humane worthy character, attended poor Walker every day, to prepare him for the final termination of an ill-ſpent life; and it is to be hoped, as his penitence ſeemed ſincere, to the commencement of an eternity of bliſs. He likewiſe uſed all the rhetoric of divinity to inſpire the wretched mother with reſignation, which together with the tender care and ſweet conſolations of Arpaſia wrought in the poor woman the juſt ſenſe of her duty in ſubmitting to her afflictions; which as they were mortal, would end with her tranſitory life—while the rewards would be permanent and everlaſting.

CHAP.

CHAP. LIV.

The End of a hardened Sinner.

AS Arpaſia had planned, her alarming letter arrived at the caſtle, ſome hours before the warrant. With what avidity did the eyes of Edward propoſe to read an epiſtle, which he ſaw ſigned by the ſtill beloved name of "Arpaſia Hanbury"—But a few lines blaſted all his hopes—His father accuſed of Forgery!—a warrant out for his apprehenſion!—and an earneſt requeſt from the injured party that he would eſcape; with, at the ſame time, a thankfulneſs to Heaven, that he, Edward, had not been involved in the guilt! what a combination of ideas:—The letter fell from his nerveleſs hand, and he ſunk inſenſible on the floor—the noiſe of his fall called the attention of his father, who was in the next room—Part of the ſtory explained itſelf—It was clear, the newly received letter had cauſed the diſorder; curioſity ſuperſeded natural affection, he ſnatched up the letter, which too ſoon revealed the myſtery.

—Edward

—Edward now revived to ſenſe—His ſeeing his father with the fatal letter, convinced him, he was acquainted with the contents, even if his countenance had not betrayed it. He dared not ſpeak to him, but ſat with his head hanging down, as if he had been the guilty perſon.

At laſt the moſt unheard-of curſes burſt from the lips of Richard Hanbury, on the devoted head of Walker, who had betrayed him—Edward begged him to reſtrain himſelf, as his agitation of ſpirit would more effectually betray him to his ſervants, and ſo cut off a retreat: He offered to attend him any where, and ſhare his fortunes with him, in any clime or country—His father burſt from him with a furious look, and ran out of the room—In the ſpace of a moment, Edward's ears were ſtruck with the report of a piſtol—For a few ſeconds, he remained rooted to the ground, but ſuddenly recovering from his ſtupor, he exclaimed, "Oh! my father! my father!" and flew to the room whence the ſound of groans proceeded—On the floor he found the wretched

wretched man, writhing in all the agony of torture; too much wounded to live, and yet he might from the appearance of the wound laſt ſometime. What a a ſituation for a man of any feeling, and Edward's heart was of a gentle nature!—If he by timely aſſiſtance ſaved his father's life, it was to end it in an ignominious manner at the fatal tree—His own deſperate hand had cut off all hopes of eſcape—And, let the wicked mark the righteous acts of Providence, with the very piſtol he deſtroyed his amiable brother—did he do this deed of deſpair, and precipitate himſelf into the preſence of an offended Deity!

THE poor wretch was carried to a bed, and all medical aſſiſtance called in—But the hopes they gave, amounted to no more than an aſſurance that he might have time to ſettle his affairs.

"SETTLE!" cried he in agony—"I "have none to ſettle here—Mine are "all to come hereafter."

HIS weeping ſon entreated him to have a clergyman—No, he would not hear of it.

"WHAT

"WHAT could a divine tell him? "It was too late to learn—and he knew "enough already—too much, ſince he "could not get rid of the memory of "what he knew."

HE execrated his hand for performing ſo ill—"It did not fail me once "before," he ſaid—He frequently called on them to deſtroy him.—In the evening, the meſſenger with the warrant, with all the parapharnalia of juſtice, arrived at the caſtle—He was then too near his death to hazard his removal, ſince that alone might accelerate it—The depoſition of Walker clearly exculpated every one elſe.

THE dying Hanbury, in a wild diſtracted manner, made a confeſſion of all his crimes, and ſeemed to have a foretaſte of the torments he expected—In vain they tried to compoſe him—Edward never left kneeling and imploring him to ſeek conſolation in repentance.

"I tell you," cried he with fierceneſs, "that an whole age of penitence could "not waſh away my guilt—My whole "life has been one black catalogue of "crimes

" crimes and blood—Talk not of repen-
" tance!—Shut out all thought, if you
" wiſh to ſee me eaſy—Stop up the ave-
" nues of memory!—Hide the lovely
" murdered Matilda from my view!—
" Wrap her in her untimely ſhroud,
" that ſhe may be for ever removed
" from my ſight; nor curſe me with her
" dying frantic breath! Bury my bro-
" ther!—bury him deep—deep! that
" his bleeding corpſe may not riſe up
" and ſay, *thus didſt thou!*—Where is
" my adulterous partner? Can ſhe
" make reparation? Where is her
" huſband? Is her conſcience ſeared
" enough to bear the whips of ſcorpi-
" ons?—Waſh all theſe from my tor-
" tured memory, and I may be at reſt!"
He then raved of many other acts of wickedneſs, in which he had been involved—and in the deepeſt agonies of black deſpair, expired the next day.—Mr. Tomkins, at the requeſt of Edward, wrote a particular account of every tranſaction to Arpaſia, who wept over the melancholy relation, and piouſly hoped, that in ſome ſhort moment, repentance might operate; and the guilty ſoul of the

the wretched Hanbury meet with a mitigation of the ſentence denounced againſt impenitent ſinners.

EDWARD HANBURY, together with his brother and ſiſter, (the former of which had juſt taken orders to qualify himſelf for holding the livings of Hanbury and Workington, vacant by the death of Doctor Bernard), immediately ſet off for London, not knowing how to diſpoſe of themſelves. As their departure was ſudden, they left to Mr. Tomkins the care of diſpoſing of the corpſe of their wretched father—Maria Hanbury deplored the loſs of her fortune, in the moſt indecent terms, which plainly ſhewed the depravity of her heart; and her little feeling for the death or the guilt that occaſioned it of her father. They repaired to their mother, to whom they were not very welcome viſitors; but ſhe could not without expoſing her brutality, ſhut her doors againſt her offſpring; though as ſhe foreſaw a diminution of her fortune, from ſuch an addition to her family, ſhe received them not very cordially. She threw every kind of blame on her deceaſed huſband,

huſband, whom ſhe accuſed of being the worſt of men. But Edward could not bear theſe cruel reflections on a man, who was now gone to anſwer for his miſdeeds, and had by his latter ſufferings, he hoped, made ſome little atonement for them.

CHAP. LV.

The Reſtoration.

AS there were no hopes for the poor criminal, Walker, Arpaſia prevailed on his mother to take a final leave of him, which ſhe had partly conſented to, when ſhe heard he was ſeized with a violent fever. His execution was neceſſarily delayed, and happily prevented in the end; as in leſs than a week he was carried off by it. To amuſe the mind of the poor woman, and paſs the time till the funeral at the caſtle was over, Arpaſia took Mrs. Walker to Hendon, in order to diſpoſe of her houſe and goods, making her the offer of reſiding with her as houſekeeper, or elſe near her in a ſmall houſe ſhe ſhould appropriate to her uſe. The ſituation which placed her within ſight of Miſs Hanbury, ſhe ſaid, would be moſt acceptable, as ſhe loved her with the tenderneſs of a mother, and revered her as an angel. The diſpoſal of her matters at Hendon was ſoon finiſhed, and then they made preparations to ſet off for the Caſtle

Caſtle of Hanbury. Arpaſia felt not that lightneſs of heart that many perſons of her ſex and age would, on the re-eſtabliſhment of her fortune; the viciſſitudes of her life had been ſo many and various, at leaſt the laſt ſix months of it, that ſhe in great meaſure loſt her reliſh for the enjoyment of it.

THE reflections which in the cottage filled her eyes with tears, made them ſtill run over in the caſtle; ſhe could not fly from herſelf, and though no company afforded her pleaſure, yet ſolitude was irkſome.

SURROUNDED with cares and inquietudes, no one but herſelf could have an idea of, ſhe travelled towards the caſtle. In the vale ſhe was met, with all the inhabitants of the villages round the caſtle. They had procured bands of muſic; their flags were ſtreaming in the wind, and all the treaſures of autumnal Flora were ſtrewed in her way. "Alas!" ſhe cried to herſelf, "Ye ſtrew roſes, but the "thorns pierce into my ſoul! How in-"competent are riches to the completion "of happineſs!—With the meaneſt of "the ſurrounding multitude, how gladly "would

"would I exchange ſtations!—Who "would I not be, rather than Arpaſia "Hanbury!"—Her tears flowed, while the air re-echoed with ſhouts and acclamations of praiſe and joy—Thus, like many a mighty hero of antiquity, whoſe head was crowned with laurels, while perhaps his heart was bleeding with inward diſtreſs, did Arpaſia make her triumphal entry juſt ſix months from the time ſhe left the caſtle—But how much happier ſhe was even then, let thoſe ſay whoſe hearts are formed of the tendereſt ſenſibility, and have had them torn to pieces by the hand they wiſhed, and truſted would ſuſtain them.

NEITHER the griefs or joys of Arpaſia, made her ſelfiſh or negligent of the welfare of others—ſhe was determined, never, as far as ſhe could prevent it, the innocent ſhould ſuffer for the guilty—Of James Hanbury, ſhe had too ill an opinion to ſettle him in her own neighbourhood, nor did ſhe think him in any degree fit for the duties of the church; but as he had looked on himſelf as already in poſſeſſion of theſe livings, ſhe knew not how to reſolve to diſappoint him—

She

She wrote to Edward, informing him, ſhe wiſhed him to prevail with his brother, to give up all thoughts of theſe livings, and ſhe would give him an adequate ſum of money to eſtabliſh himſelf any where elſe—On Maria, ſhe would ſettle four thouſand pounds; ſhe ſhould eſtimate the value of the livings at ten—and the remainder of the ſum, originally intended for younger children which would amount to ſixteen thouſand, ſhe begged he would accept of—And, if on mature deliberation, he ſhould like the clerical profeſſion, the livings ſhould be at his ſervice—Such unexpected, nay unexampled goodneſs, overwhelmed Edward—He knew not how to make, or reſtrain his acknowledgements—James wanted to perſuade him, that Arpaſia was in love with him, and that yet he might obtain her hand; he, however, had too much ſenſe, and too much goodneſs of heart, not to give her credit for her excellence without ſuch a view.—He freely owned in a letter to her, that to live within her neighbourhood, would be too dangerous to his peace—He had been accuſtomed to live in France, and for

ſome time at leaſt, he ſhould wiſh to make it his reſidence. He called for the choiceſt bleſſings on her head—and prayed to Heaven, ſhe might meet the moſt felicitous fortune on earth—To hear of her welfare would ever be the higheſt happineſs he could enjoy.

MARIA and her mother not agreeing, ſhe accompanied her brother James into Yorkſhire, where he procured a living —They continue to reſide together— Their minds are ſuited to each other; they are not of a kind of beings to be reſpected, or experience much happineſs from the reſult of their own feelings. Diſappointment has not ſweetened their tempers, and pride with want of proper ſenſe, have not conciliated the good will of their pariſhioners, with whom they aſſociate but little.

CHAP.

CHAP. LVII.

The Golden Age reſtored.

ARPASIA made the tour of the cottages, imperceptibly her horſe's head was turned to the glade; ſhe ſighed, when ſhe beheld it—A tear ruſhed into her eye—ſhe thought ſhe would turn back—No—why ſhould ſhe—another day ſhe ſhould feel as much—another!—every day, her treacherous memory too fatally ſtored, would preſent to her images that ought to be forgotten for ever.

THE peaceful inhabitants of the glade ran out in tranſport, to meet her—She went into Greenwood's cottage, and the firſt object that ſtruck her eyes was the drawing, of which, ſhe ſighing deeply, remembered too well in whoſe hands ſhe had ſeen the copy—The old man, his wife, and all their numerous deſcendants were clamorous in the praiſe of their noble landlord; though they ſtill wiſhed ſhe was again in poſſeſſion of the property; for although they revered him, they adored her.

"OH! why did he ever deviate?" ſhe cried—"Why muſt I be for ever con-
"demning myſelf for not truſting him
"—To learn the painful leſſon, I muſt
"no more viſit the peaceful glade—It is
"dangerous to liſten to his elogium
"when it is my intereſt to forget him for
"ever."

To leave her mind as little as poſſible in the power of the demon Melancholy, Arpaſia buſied herſelf in a thouſand acts of benevolence, and ſettled many little differences that had ariſen among her tenants—Mr. Tomkins informed her of many abuſes which they had ſuffered; all among them were not equally good—ſuch had, by underhand dealings, prevailed on Mr. Richard Hanbury to turn ſome out, for the benefit of themſelves or friends—The ſchool which ſhe had inſtituted, had been neglected—The miſtreſs died in a few weeks after Arpaſia left the country, and all had gone to ruin—She thought Mrs. Hutchins, the late houſekeeper of Doctor Bernard, would ſupply her place; to her ſhe immediately ſent, who gladly accepted the offer, being very well qualified for the undertaking

undertaking—Even the ſight of this poor woman renewed in her boſom the keeneſt agonies; the voluntary bounty of Lord Derville to her, had impreſſed her heart with the moſt reſpectable eſteem for him—Alas! one tranſaction of a diſhonourable complexion was to obliterate the very many good actions ſhe had known him perform.

In a few weeks every thing on the eſtate was put on the beſt footing—Harmony reigned amongſt them all—Arpaſia's name was never mentioned but with bleſſings, and her heart filled with the true happineſs of beſtowing benefits in ſome degree, loſt the poignancy of her ſorrows in the conviction, that ſhe leſſened thoſe of every one that fell within her knowledge or power.

Very ſoon after ſhe was ſettled at the caſtle, ſhe wrote both to Mr. Travers and his ſiſters—She could never have forgiven herſelf, if ſhe had ſuffered them to remain in ignorance of the re-eſtabliſhment of her fortune, or if ſhe left the knowledge of it to chance.

But though ſhe was explicit to them reſpecting her affairs, ſhe declined mak-

ing them the offer of an invitation to the caſtle, briefly obſerving the fatality which precluded an acquaintance with perſons for whom ſhe ſhould ever entertain the moſt perfect eſteem and lively gratitude.

SHE ſent moſt coſtly and elegant preſents to them, in acknowledgement of her obligations--She expreſſed a maternal fondneſs for her ſweet little Auguſta; but the name of Lord Derville, never fell from her pen.

Mr. TRAVERS loved her very much, and would fain have conſtrued her non-invitation into forgetfulneſs—Lady Anne thought otherwiſe; and diſſuaded him from his wiſh of paying her a viſit—Her never mentioning Lord Derville, did not ſtrike her as particular; ſhe could not know her ſentiments for him, and the peculiar ſituation of Arpaſia and Lord Derville rendered it a propriety of conduct in the eyes of Lady Anne.

ALL connection and acquaintance now ſeemed quite at an end—"I ſhall neither "ſee or hear more from them," cried Arpaſia—"We ſhall be as if we had ne-"ver met—Oh! would to Heaven we "never had; or that I could forget "them!"

SHE

She had the felicity of ſeeing all her dependants happy; and the misfortune to feel herſelf wretched. The want of an elegant and pleaſing companion, certainly contributed to render the ſolitary hours of Arpaſia more tedious. She had the love of all who knew her, but ſhe wanted a friend to whom ſhe could unboſom herſelf, with the ſweet unreſtraint of mutual confidence.

She was moving in a ſphere, where all was too much below her. Both Catherine and Mrs. Walker were very worthy creatures, but their ſtate of dependence, and the line which birth and education had placed between them, made them improper companions for her to aſſociate with—She regretted the loſs of Lady Anne Travers's company; ſhe was ſenſible, and of a refined underſtanding. How happy ſhe thought ſhe could paſs her time with her, and the dear little Auguſta. But fate prevented her wiſhes; it had for ever interdicted a communication which her heart told her would have contributed to her comfort.

She received the kindeſt congratulations from both her ladyſhip and Mr. Tra-

vers, but they followed her lead, and after the politeſt thanks for her elegant preſents and friendly wiſhes for her happineſs; nothing occurred, by which ſhe could flatter herſelf, that they even thought her total ſilence on a renewal of acquaintance, or on the ſubject of her not mentioning Lord Derville, any thing extraordinary.

It was very much her wiſh to re-purchaſe the property of the glade; but there lay ſome difficulty in the negociation. She requeſted Mr. Tomkins to make application to Lord Derville on the ſubject.

The old ſteward readily undertook it. He knew the ſum of money it had coſt, together with the alteration that had been made; for two more cottages were erected to form a kind of quadrangle according to the original deſign of Arpaſia, which the preſent landlord had a particular pleaſure in adopting. As Lord Derville found from Mr. Tomkins's letter, that his lady had really ſet her heart on having the little eſtate back again, he made no objection to the parting with it. He only hinted his wiſh of its being accepted

cepted as a ſmall tribute to the worth of the amiable poſſeſſor; this it may be believed, was rejected with rather an hauteur unnatural to Arpaſia. She reſumed her property, to the infinite joy of the venerable cottager and his family, which was continued to them at the ſame rent they held it from Lord Derville. The affair was ſettled time enough for the wedding of Sally Burrage, with her couſin John Greenwood, on the 24th of October, the day on which Arpaſia attained the age of twenty. The money that was to have been received by Lord Derville, he deſired Tomkins to diſtribute amongſt the worthy inhabitants of the glade, on that day which had given birth to their landlady.

CHAP. LVIII.

An Acquiſition.

WHEN Arpaſia left the Caſtle, ſhe carried many things of value with her to her old friend Doctor Bernard's, and which had been left there. It was now time to think of diſpoſing of the livings, and therefore a journey to Workington became very neceſſary. She had fixed on a very worthy perſon, who had been ſome years curate to the Doctor; and who, having a large family, the acceſſion of ſome hundreds to his now narrow income would be very acceptable. He was a man of family; but, from having married contrary to the inclination of his father, had been cut off with a ſhilling. His brother, when he came into poſſeſſion of the eſtate, was very kind in taking notice of him and the children; but having the title of a baronet to ſupport, found his fortune by no means ſufficient to make any conſiderable addition to the curate's income. He however would frequently ſend for the

the children, and gave them opportunities of receiving ſome polite learning with his own. Two of the ſons he got out to India, and the eldeſt daughter ſpent moſt of her time in his houſe. An accidental illneſs of her mother now called her home, and as the parſonage-houſe at Workington was empty, Mr. Richard Hanbury had given them leave to reſide in it during the ſequeſtration of the living. The emoluments of which he beſtowed on him likewiſe till his ſon James could hold it, together with Hanbury. Arpaſia had not ſeen Miſs Brandon ſince they were children, though ſhe had been very kind to all the family; but, as it has been ſaid, her reſidence had been moſtly with Sir Thomas at another part of Worceſterſhire. On her arrival at Workington, ſhe was happy to find ſo pleaſing an addition to the group. Caroline Brandon was a ſenſible charming girl of twenty-two. Her mind had been much cultivated by her uncle's attention; her manners were gentle, and a ſweet but melancholy air in an inſtant intereſted the heart of Arpaſia. She flattered herſelf ſhe ſhould find ſomething

thing congenial in the mind of Caroline. Nor was ſhe miſtaken. A perfect ſympathy of ſentiment inſenſibly attached them to each other—but in ſo early an acquaintance there could be no confidence. It is only ſilly and weak girls that commence friendſhips ſuddenly, and rapidly repoſe in each other the ſecrets of their hearts and families.

SENSIBLE and better inſtructed minds are convinced of the ſtability of each other's worth, before they lay open to their view the receſſes of their hearts. Confidence is the baſis, curioſity the bane of friendſhip—And there may be ſecrets too ſacred ever to be divulged to the tendereſt friend—ſecrets which may concern others as well as ourſelves—and which none but a curious impertinent would urge to know; ſo none but a weak and fooliſh girl would ſeek to diſcloſe.

THERE is a kind of free-maſonry in love matters—Arpaſia ſaw ſymptoms in Caroline, which no doubt Caroline as ſoon diſcovered in Arpaſia. But they at the ſame time mutually diſcovered what was of more importance, that each

each poſſeſſed qualities that made them worthy of each other's friendſhip. Each feeling in her own heart the fatal neceſſity of ſuppreſſing an unfortunate attachment. They learned to reſpect each other's ſufferings; and if an involuntary ſigh would heave the boſom of Arpaſia, Caroline turned her conſcious head aſide, and though her breaſt echoed reſponſively, ſhe ſeemed not ſenſible of any interruption of their converſation.

THEIR ſubjects were ſuch as they could join in, and indulge the pleaſing melancholy that had gained a too ſovereign ſway over each. Yet it prevented them not from beſtowing their ſhare of amuſement, indeed they were the greateſt promoters of it. They both loved muſic. Arpaſia put her harp in tune, and Caroline accompanied her voice in duets. Mr. Brandon, a ſenſible worthy man, found his heart expand with delight, as the means of providing for his family were now ſo ample—the produce of the two livings being near eight hundred a year; and Arpaſia, with that judgment which ſhe ever diſcovered, and with a grace all her own,

had

had inſiſted on furniſhing the Rectory of Hanbury; where, for her own ſake, ſhe requeſted him to fix his reſidence.

It was now ſhe began to enjoy herſelf—ſhe had found in Caroline Brandon a companion that ſuited her. They were for ever together; and the only wiſh ſhe could now form, was by ſome means to diſcover whoſe image it was that ſat enthroned on the amiable heart of her friend, and ſhe enlarged that wiſh by fondly hoping it might be in her power to unite her for ever to the man ſhe honoured with her affections.

The Caſtle was the ſeat of harmony and feſtive mirth at Chriſtmas. The hall was filled with the tenantry, and the ſervants' hall with the peaſants. Caroline was the right hand of Arpaſia. There was an union of thought which ſhewed itſelf in every thing. The ſame benevolence, the ſame diſcriminating judgment, the ſame propriety in beſtowing alms. Every object had ſome claim upon them. To none were they deaf—or would they turn their eyes away from diſtreſs in any ſhape. The hardened bold beggar they ſought to reclaim, and provided

provided with employ; if on a trial, which was patiently attended to, they were found idle, diſſolute, and abandoned, they were ordered to quit the neighbourhood under pain of confinement, and whatever puniſhment they could inflict. But how did their hearts exult when they gained a proſelyte!—— When they could change the ſturdy mendicant (a burthen to the ſtate) to an honeſt labourer, the riches of the nation! And ſuch is the force of precept when incolated by good example, that theſe inſtances were not very rare. In a few months there was not a beggar in the environ of the Caſtle. Thoſe that from ill habit choſe to remain ſuch ſoon bent their ſteps another way. Thoſe who had better principles readily flocked where they were ſure to procure employ; and not be conſtrained to go to a pariſh, which, whether from inherent pride, which in an Engliſh boſom is called a love of liberty and independence, is to one and all ſo extremely obnoxious.

The conſtant exerciſe of ſuch powers left the friends little time for dwelling on the ſorrows which in a ſtate of idleneſs

neſs corrodes the boſom, and ſhuts it up from the misfortunes of the world to contemplate on its own feelings. But the impreſſions each had received were not worn out—the names, which yet never paſſed the lips of either, were written in indelible characters. Even philoſophy, reaſon, and religion, it has been proved, were too weak to obliterate from the heart of Arpaſia, a paſſion which all three united to condemn. It was interwoven with her exiſtence, and with that only could it end. But it no longer tore her boſom with anguiſh. Her employments and the neceſſary attention ſhe paid her numerous gueſts (for all her acquaintance came to ſee her now her eſtabliſhment was fixed) were ſuch claims on her time as ſhe could not avoid giving up to. And, by recalling her mind from objects too intereſting and too habitual ever to be thought of without emotion, ſhe inſenſibly afforded relief.

CAROLINE one day took out her pocket-book to give her a little copy of verſes which they intended ſetting to muſic. Some other papers came out at the ſame time,

time, which ſhe was haſtily putting up, when ſomebody coming in, the ſong was no more thought of. They went into the garden, and ſome hours after Arpaſia, going into the library where they had been ſitting, ſaw a little piece of paper lying on the ground that ſeemed to be the outline of a face. She picked it up, but what aſtoniſhment ſeized her when ſhe plainly beheld the profile of Lord Derville. The *contour* of that face it was impoſſible ſhe ſhould ever forget, or be miſtaken in. That it had dropped from the pocket-book of Caroline was as certain. Was Lord Derville then the man for whom ſhe ſighed? Where could ſhe ever have been acquainted with him? Could he have given it to her? Ah! had he availed himſelf of his too ſeducing powers to captivate the innocent heart of this amiable girl. Oh! how reprehenſible ſhe ſhould think him. *Should think him*—had ſhe not ſufficient reaſon in her own ſad particular to reprehend him? What would ſhe give to have him clear himſelf of this offence! What could ſhe reſolve on? How ſhould ſhe be ſatisfied? How could ſhe wound the

the boſom of Caroline by making the enquiry? Perhaps ſhe knew not he was a married man! Oh! if he was capable of ſuch baſeneſs, how eaſy would the taſk be of baniſhing him for ever from her heart. "Alas!" cried ſhe, weeping, "I thought—I hoped I had done ſo long "ago. Muſt the ſweet boſom of my "gentle Caroline be torn by the ſame "barbed arrow that rankles in mine!" Her eyes were red with tears, and ſhe wandered into the air to recover herſelf; but, forgetting the reſolution ſhe made, ſhe burſt into a freſh agony of grief, when ſhe was conſcious ſhe could do ſo unobſerved. At laſt her reaſon prevails, or the ſources of tears were dry. More compoſed, and yet ignorant how ſhe ſhould reſtore the profile to the right owner, without wounding her ſenſibility, ſhe went into the houſe— a little artifice preſented itſelf to her imagination, for ſhe had conſulted her judgment without ſucceſs. She dropped the fatal likeneſs on the ground from whence ſhe had taken it, and, apparently without deſign, led Caroline to the ſpot. She pointed out to her ſhe had dropped ſomething.

thing. Caroline ſtooped, picked it up, a little bluſh at firſt tinged her cheek, but without the leaſt emotion ſhe put it in her pocket-book. She ſpoke not a word. Arpaſia had not power to articulate a ſyllable, but turned away and walked out of the room. A carriage drove up to the door with ſome company, who ſtaid with them till evening. Caroline ſeemed juſt as uſual. Arpaſia was frequently loſt in thought. She retired ſoon after ſupper, that was on her part almoſt a ſilent one; and her pale dejected looks, with ſunken eyes, the next morning too plainly told how the night had been paſſed.

CHAP.

CHAP. LIX.

The Explanation.

CAROLINE bore a moſt tender regard for her friend, and was extremely hurt to ſee ſo manifeſt an alteration in her. Tho' never gay, ſhe had not for a long time ſeen her grave, and never beheld her ſpirits ſo depreſſed as they now were. She knew not to what cauſe to attribute it. Arpaſia had received no information that could have thus affected her peace. She felt anxious to know. She wiſhed it was in her power to chace away the penſive anguiſh that was pining at her heart, to dreſs her ſweet face with ſmiles, and calm her ruffled boſom. But how, or in which way ſhould ſhe do it? She knew not what might have paſſed in the many years ſhe had been ſeparated from her. She was not authoriſed to dive into her ſecret thoughts, her only buſineſs then was to ſeek to divert them. For which purpoſe ſhe prepared a thouſand things moſt likely to intereſt the feelings of ſuch a mind

mind as Arpaſia. She ſaw into the good deſign of Caroline; ſhe felt gratefully for the attention of this amiable girl; and whatever cares or troubles invaded her boſom, ſhe gloſſed them over with a ſmile, and for a while bade them reſt.

THEY went that evening to drink tea at the Rectory. The delight with which the good Mr. Brandon and his family ever received their charming patroneſs gave pleaſure to her of the higheſt kind. Theſe were propenſities it did her honour to indulge. Here ſhe might enjoy all the luxury of benevolence, and truly experience all that mortals can feel in the God-like attribute of beſtowing benefits on the worthy.

HER viſit was of ſervice to her. She returned infinitely more chearful than ſhe ſat out. Caroline was happy to ſee this improvement; it gave her ſpirits, and ſhe was vaſtly more gay at ſupper than Arpaſia had ever known her.

THE butler, an honeſt excellent old ſervant, liſtened with rapture to the converſation that paſſed; for Arpaſia ſeemed inſpired with the hilarity of her friend.

friend. Caroline fixed her eyes on him for a moment, and tearing off a ſmall piece of paper from the cover of a letter, and taking out her ſciſſars, without ſtopping the converſation, cut out his profile, which was an art ſhe was a great proficient in—and as ſoon as his departure gave her leave, laid it on the table before the eyes of Arpaſia. The likeneſs, which was a very accurate one, ſtruck her amazingly. It was clear now that ſhe had been in company with Lord Derville, and had ſufficiently contemplated his face to cut it out. In a heſitating manner ſhe aſked, if ſhe often took thoſe likeneſſes—"Yes," ſhe replied, "when any particular turn of features ſtrike me."

"AND are you always thus ſucceſs-
"ful?"

"IN general—I will ſhew you ſome," taking out the fatal pocket-book. Arpaſia changed colour.

"BUT perhaps I do not know any of
"the perſons?"

"Here is one," ſhewing her father—then one of her mother—"and this is
"my uncle—and this is—no, not that"
removing

removing one, "this is my couſin Bran-
"don—And this," ſaid ſhe, with a ſigh, and her cheeks ſuffuſed with bluſhes, "is a gentleman, who laſt Eaſter was "on a viſit at my uncle's."

"You won't let me ſee that, Caro-
"line?" ſaid Arpaſia.

"Most willingly, my dear Miſs "Hanbury," ſaid ſhe, "though I own "I ought not to keep it. Indeed I have "not much occaſion" ſhe added in a voice almoſt below a whiſper. Arpaſia's feelings can be but ill deſcribed, her breath grew thick, her temples beat, and her whole frame was agitated; ſhe took the fatal piece of paper in her hand—What myſtery! It was no longer the profile of Lord Derville, the dreaded Lord Derville, that met her eye. Sir James Hawley's features exactly delineated.

"Sir James Hawley," exclaimed Arpaſia.

"Do you know him?" aſked Caroline, with a face pale as aſhes, and a faultering voice that in one inſtant told the whole ſtory.

"I HAVE

"I HAVE ſeen him," anſwered ſhe, "but gathering a little more courage, "added, have you no more to ſhew me? "I do not think I have ſeen all your "collection."

"OH! no," ſaid Caroline, aſſuming courage too, from Arpaſia's manner— "I have ſeveral more. This is a parti- "cular friend of Sir James. My Lord "Derville, one of the handſomeſt men "I ever beheld, and I believe as amia- "ble as his perſon is faultleſs. I paſſed "near a fortnight with him at Brandon "Lodge. I do not know hardly a more "agreeable man—my dear Arpaſia, "what ails you? Are you ſick? You "look pale as death. Is the room too "cloſe?"

"No, no," cried Arpaſia, riſing and walking about, gaſping for breath—"I "ſhall be better by and bye. Be ſo "kind as to leave me for a few mo- "ments. Indeed, my dear, I ſhall be "better if alone."

"OH! pardon me, my deareſt Miſs "Hanbury, if I diſobey you; I cannot "leave you, and ſee you thus diſtreſſed "—Is there any think in my power to "aſſiſt

"assist you. For Heaven's sake," continued she, kneeling by the sopha on which Arpasia had thrown herself—"suffer me to console you if possible. "My heart has bled more than once "this day; I saw your pale disordered "looks this morning; I have exerted "myself even more than my poor "powers are equal to, to raise your "spirits—Why are you not happy? "You, who are so good, so desirous of "making every one so. Oppressed with "my own feelings, I shall not be able "to survive any distress that overwhelms "you."

"My sweetest Caroline," cried the affectionate Arpasia, folding her to her bosom, "I will strive to be better for "your sake—No, your excellent heart "shall not be overwhelmed with my "sorrows—You, dear girl! I doubt "have too many of your own."

"I HAVE none, if I see my beloved "Miss Hanbury happy."

"My dearest Caroline, do you know "Lord Derville is a married man?"—She hesitated while she pronounced the name—Caroline looked at her for a moment, without speaking.

"GOOD God!" cried Arpaſia, "how "am I to interpret this ſilence?"

"WILL my amiable Miſs Hanbury "forgive me, for daring to read her "thoughts? I ſee you are acquainted "with Lord Derville, and that you ap- "prehend his fine figure and accom- "pliſhments, have impreſſed me with a "partiality they might well inſpire—I "have in a thouſand inſtances received "proofs of your friendſhip—but tell "me—yet do not, if you feel the leaſt "diſinclination to divulge your thoughts "—No, I will attribute it to the ſo-of- "ten experienced goodneſs of your "heart—and believe, if you wiſh I "ſhould, that all the diſtreſs you diſ- "cover, is for fear your unhappy Ca- "roline ſhould be improperly attached "to a married man."

ARPASIA could not for one moment ſupport the idea of being diſingenuous—"No, my generous Caroline," ſaid ſhe, "I will not deceive you, I have long "known Lord Derville—and if he too "had power to break your peace, as he "has mine for ever, I ſhall but ſtrive to "tear his idea from my heart with dou-

"ble

" ble energy—I will own" ſhe added, while the tears ran down her glowing cheek, " that yeſterday I ſaw this fatal " little likeneſs—Oh! my Caroline, you " know not how weak, how reprehenſi- " ble your friend is. Sympathetic in " our feelings, and congenial in our ſen- " timents, are we both doomed to the " ſame misfortune?"

" YOUR confidence, my deareſt Arpaſia, " calls for the ſame openneſs on my part " —I admire Lord Derville—All who " know him muſt do ſo; but the idea of " love for him never entered my mind. " He honoured me with that attention " which a polite man finds incumbent on " himſelf to do; and nothing farther. " But," continued ſhe, bluſhing and hiding her face on the ſhoulder of Arpaſia, as they ſat ſide by ſide—" dare I own his " friend—Alas! I ought not to have given " way to the deluſive hope! I will not " however, conceal a thought—a weak- " neſs from you, his friend Sir James " Hawley could not be beheld with equal " indifference; I ſtrove not to yield to " the too pleaſing, too flattering idea " that I was not indifferent to him; you

"know him, madam, will the eſtimable "qualities that even impartial juſtice "muſt allow him, will they operate to "excuſe my folly?"

THOUGH relieved from the apprehenſion that they were both ſighing in vain for the ſame object, yet Arpaſia felt the utmoſt diſtreſs on finding her amiable friend was ſtill the prey of a hopeleſs flame; hardly knowing how to continue a converſation on the ſubject, ſhe took the likelieſt method of pleaſing Caroline, tho' certainly the moſt ineffectual to the cure of her paſſion. She allowed every merit which juſtice made due to Sir James; but in the circumſtance of his addreſs to herſelf, ſhe preſerved a ſtrict ſilence, only obſerving it was a little ſingular, that although their ſentiments and opinions ſo intirely coincided in almoſt every thing, yet in their preferences they ſhould be ſo very different, ſince Sir James Hawley never would have been the object of her choice, notwithſtanding ſhe really felt a great eſteem for him. She gathered from Caroline, who found pleaſure in opening her whole ſoul, that the behaviour of the baronet had been

of

of that kind, to conciliate the affection of a gentle tender girl, whoſe ſenſibility and gratitude was excited by a diſtinction that ſhe, diveſted of fortune and conſequence, could not but ſee was paid to herſelf alone—And indeed ſhe had made ſome impreſſion on the heart of Sir James, though he did not intend to do ſo much miſchief as was actually the caſe—Caroline was infinitely ſuperior to her couſins, and as ſuch, intereſted Hawley—Her beauty attracted, and her uncommon ſweetneſs of temper, induced him to pay more than ordinary attention to her—If at that time he had been diſpoſed to marry, he knew not the woman ſo likely to make him happy as Caroline Brandon. But when his intimacy with Lord Derville brought him acquainted with Arpaſia, he felt ſo ardent a paſſion for her, that his little rural charmer was hardly thought of more, and he ſecretly rejoiced that he had never made any open declaration to her.—This is ſo common a *trait* in the character of mankind, that they think nothing of it—No matter what interpretation women put on their marked aſſiduities—They acquit

themſelves to their own conſciences, if they have not abſolutely in ſo many words ſaid, "I love you;" and perhaps too often laugh at the credulous girl, who they have for months given up their time to the ſole purpoſe of pleaſing, if ſhe ſhould be weak enough to ſuppoſe they were ever in earneſt.

ARPASIA's taſk was a hard one; ſhe could not have the cruelty to inform Caroline, (beſides the apparent vanity of it,) that ſhe could have no hopes after the tender profeſſions of Sir James to herſelf, and his conſequent viſit to the continent, neither could ſhe encourage the amiable girl in her unfortunate attachment.

"THERE is a fatal ſimilarity," ſaid ſhe, "my dear Caroline, between us: We "have each a peculiar call for all the "ſtrength of our reaſon, to combat the "too tender propenſities of our hearts "—Let us unite in the arduous under-"taking of conquering our weakneſs— "I believe, and hope we ſhall find it ea-"ſier from this free communication of "our ſentiments; yet I am convinced "we ſhall encreaſe our difficulties, by "dwelling too much on them—The

"ſtruggles

" ſtruggles I have had, have too viſibly
" injured my health; and after all why
" am I thus affected, becauſe I created
" a form in my own mind and falſely,
" fooliſhly called it by the name of Der-
" ville—The charm is now broken for
" ever; I will, indeed I will forget him,
" and I fear it is a leſſon—a hard one I
" know it, which I muſt recommend to
" my Caroline."

CAROLINE was too noble minded to hear Lord Derville accuſed, without wiſhing to be his advocate—" I will not " pretend," ſaid ſhe, " to vindicate his " lordſhip from the cenſure you may " have had cauſe to beſtow on him—but " that he poſſeſſes ſome of the moſt " amiable qualities, I am well aſſured."

IN ſupport of her aſſertion, ſhe added many inſtances of the general philanthropy of his mind; his liberality of ſentiment, his worth, affability, generoſity and a long—but not to Arpaſia's ears, tedious catalogue of his virtues. " Ah!" cried ſhe with a ſigh, " why am *I* alone " deprived of the pleaſure of giving my " fiat to ſo amiable a character? Why " muſt *I* ever deplore in myſelf the fa-

" tal exception? Why ſhould one fault,
" one inexpiable offence, act as a ſponge
" to wipe out the fair liſt of excellencies,
" my diſcriminating friend has ſo ſweet-
" ly ſtrung together."

A LETTER written with his own hand, was too incontrovertible an evidence for Caroline to attempt invalidating—ſhe could only lament he was not all perfection, and join with her dear Arpaſia in the neceſſary reformation, with all the ſtrength of reſolution it was poſſible for two young women to adopt; they paſſed almoſt the whole night in their firſt eſſay, for they ceaſed not talking of Lord Derville and Sir James Hawley, till the almoſt expiring candles warned them it was time to go to bed; with ſurprize they ſaw it was paſt four in the morning.

IN their ramble in the park, being a fine ſpring morning, they united in declaring what a relief to their minds the laſt night's conference had occaſioned, though their daily avocation went on, and the ſprings of benevolence and hoſpitality never failed, yet they frequently found time to renew their converſations, and compare the progreſs they each made

made in their cure. Poor ſilly girls! they deceived themſelves! their hearts were lightened of the load of "griefs "undivided," but whenever the hand of reaſon probed the wound, they plainly diſcovered they were not "huſhed into "peace."

CHAP. LX.

An Adventure.

THE ſpring was now far advanced, and the friends continued daily improving in the opinion of each other—they had devoted themſelves to a life of celibacy, ſince they were convinced no other affection could ever be created in their boſoms, than what had firſt impreſſed them.

ARPASIA had for ſome time laboured under a ſlight diſorder of the hectic kind, and Caroline was ſo great an advocate for change of air, that at her expreſs deſire, they ſat off on a little excurſion, meaning to ſpend ſome time at the Hotwells at Briſtol. The air, exerciſe, and variety of perſons and places ſoon reſtored her health. She uſed to ride and walk on the hills, Caroline ever her companion—One day as they were driving in the cabriole, a poor emaciated figure, ſuch as are too often ſeen at thoſe ſalutary ſprings, was tottering along by herſelf, ſeeming every moment ready

to

to expire—Compaſſion made Arpaſia check her horſes ſpeed, and ſhe turned her face to catch the eye of the invalid, hoping to be of ſome ſervice to her—The ſpectre looked up—Started, gave a faint exclamation, and ſunk on the earth.

THIS very circumſtance alone would have given an extreme ſhock to ſo gentle a heart as Arpaſia's; but there was ſomething in the voice and manner that ſtruck on "the nerve where agonies "are born"—She gave the reins to Caroline, and jumped out of the carriage, haſtening to the almoſt dying wretch—Caroline ſoon got rid of her charge, by calling to one of the ſervants, and flew to the aſſiſtance of her friend, whom ſhe feared would be quite overcome, as her face was as pale as the poor creature's on the ground.—Who lifting up her eyes and again meeting Arpaſia's, endeavoured to turn her head aſide—"Oh! "it muſt be her."—Arpaſia cried out. "It muſt be my poor unhappy Char-"lotte!—I have met with you at laſt—"Dear, dear Charlotte, ſpeak to me?"

"AND

"AND can you call me by ſuch en-
"dearing names?" cried ſhe—"Oh!
"leave me to my juſt fate—I deſerve
"not this pity, this attention from you
"—They harrow up my ſoul, which
"would fain depart in peace—and be
"for ever forgotten"—The tears ran in copious ſtreams down the face of Arpaſia, and fell on the boſom of Charlotte.

"OH!" ſhe cried "I have ever wiſh-
"ed to ſee you—but not thus to meet
"my firſt friend—I earneſtly hoped we
"ſhould meet—as I never could be hap-
"py till I had cleared up all ſuſpicion
"in your boſom."

"TALK not thus kindly to me"—ſhe anſwered—"I have been the vileſt of
"wretches—your forgiveneſs I could
"bear, but your tenderneſs ſubdues me
"quite—I do not—oh! my dear Arpa-
"ſia, if you will allow me to call you
"ſo—I do not deſerve to be treated
"thus by you; ſtained with guilt and
"dying in conſequence of it—you ſhould
"ſpurn me from your preſence."

"No," cried Arpaſia, "my repent-
"ant Charlotte ſhall be held next my
"boſom, we will part no more—In my

"foſtering

" foſtering care your health ſhall be reſ-
" tored, and peace and happineſs may
" yet be yours."

" NEVER! Never!" ſhe replied.

THEY got her into the chaiſe, and Arpaſia ſitting by her, and ſupporting her in her arms, they reached a little cottage, where lived a humane widow, who Arpaſia had been kind to—there ſhe procured an aſylum for her poor friend, with every comfortable accommodation. What a taſk to relate to Caroline, that this poor ſqualid wretch, covered with rags, diſeaſe and vermin, was the wife of her noble friend Lord Derville.

HER firſt care was to carry a ſufficient change of linen, and every thing to make her ſtate as eaſy as poſſible, together with a phyſician, to whom ſhe ſaid the poor patient had known better days, without informing him farther.

THE cordials, clean cloathing, and great tenderneſs of Arpaſia, ſeemed to have a good effect on the wretched Charlotte—Arpaſia was all impatience to hear the recital of her ſtory, and the ſtrange viciſſitudes, by which ſhe had been reduced

duced to this deplorable condition; but it was a curioſity that at preſent her ſolicitude for her poor friend's reſtoration ſufficiently repelled—She paſſed many hours of each day by her bed-ſide, adminiſtering to her with all the affection poſſible, and ſoothing her ſorrows without hinting at the follies that had produced them.

The doctor who attended her, gave Arpaſia but little hopes of her recovery—the ſtate of her blood, from a bad diſorder neglected, had occaſioned ſymptoms of a moſt alarming nature; ſhe herſelf thought ſhe ſhould not live—She did not wiſh it, only to be reconciled to her friends, and receive their forgiveneſs; ſhe was travelling, ſhe ſaid to Berkſhire, to attain a ſight of her poor father, if poſſible, to be reſtored to his love; but conſcious of her unworthineſs, ſhe travelled like one without hope—As her ſenſibility ſeemed awakened, Arpaſia ſaid to her—"You "wiſhed to gain a bleſſing from your "parent—I hope, my dear Charlotte, "you remember you have a child?"—"I do—I do—" cried ſhe, while the tears

tears flowed from her eyes—"I well re-
"member, though I have proved ſuch
"a diſgrace to it, that never to have my
"name mentioned before her, will be
"an happineſs—I have an huſband too,
"whom I have cruelly injured; I never
"loved him, but that was the leaſt of
"my faults; it might be charged to the
"error of nature—No, all that I knew
"of that deſtructive paſſion I laviſhed
"on the moſt worthleſs of human be-
"ings. If I have ſtrength remaining,
"I will to-morrow relate to you my ſad
"hiſtory; you will notwithſtanding the
"exquiſite gentleneſs of your diſpoſiti-
"on have much to blame me for; I know
"how culpable I have been, but I was
"not bleſt with your good ſenſe; too
"weak in myſelf, I fell a prey to the
"artful and deſigning."

At her earneſt requeſt, Arpaſia wrote to Lady Anne Travers, the circumſtance of meeting with her, and her ſincere penitence; ſhe begged that ſhe might be impowered to aſſure her dying friend, that her crimes were forgiven. She wrote a pathetic letter to Mr. Bromley on the ſame ſubject, and the next day,

together with Caroline, at the expreſs wiſh of Charlotte, who choſe to have a witneſs of this converſation, ſhe repaired to the cottage, where the once blooming and faſhion-leading Lady Derville was laid; a wretched ſpectacle for the vain and giddy to contemplate, and an example to make them tremble, leſt the fatal end may be theirs.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXI.

The Fair Penitent.

"I WAS too inconſiderate," ſaid Charlotte, "to attempt to conceal my follies "from you. I am convinced you ſaw "my unhappy partiality very early for "the vileſt of men. I too well remem- "ber the many ſenſible and friendly "things you ſaid to me on the occaſion; "and had I received your inſtructions "and followed your advice I had been "happy. But I had not virtuous prin- "ciples—I am certain I had not, or I "ſhould not have fallen a victim to the "art of Colonel Howitzer and Lady "Marſden. A faſhionable levity was "my bane in the firſt inſtance. The "Colonel had diſtinguiſhed himſelf in "the annals of gallantry. I was flattered "with having a man in my train that "half the women of my acquaintance "admired, and ſome few had found "dangerous. I really meant nothing "more than to attach him to me, and at "firſt had no bad intention. Thus was

"I ſitu-

" I ſituated when you became a viſitor at
" my houſe. I uſed to love you very
" much when I was a girl. I muſt have
" been the moſt ungrateful of wretches
" not to have done ſo; but the ſuperiority
" I could not but ſee independent of rich-
" es, made me rather fear than love you,
" after the renewal of our friendſhip in
" Portman-ſquare. I then ſoon learned
" it was neceſſary to be cautious in my
" conduct, as your penetrating eyes and
" ſolicitude for my happineſs gave you
" a quick-ſightedneſs, that to my fooliſh
" apprehenſion made you troubleſome
" to me. I was weak enough to inform
" the Colonel of the neceſſity of being
" very circumſpect before you. I could
" not have given more encouragement to
" ſuch a man, ſo well verſed in intrigue;
" it was in effect giving him an entire
" power over me, which he failed not to
" uſe to his advantage. Indeed I do not
" mean to throw all the blame of my
" ſubſequent conduct on him; I am too
" fully ſenſible that the excuſes of a
" married woman on the ſcore of ſeduc-
" tion are futile and vain. They are
" too often the ſeducers themſelves, and

" even

" even Colonel Howitzer, if my perſon
" had attracted him, would not have
" thought of ſubduing my virtue, had I
" not by a thouſand coquettiſh arts af-
" forded him reaſon enough to believe it
" was not impregnable. But, as I ſaid
" before, I really had no further intenti-
" on than to mortify ſome women of my
" acquaintance, who I perceived were
" deſirous of being the firſt in his notice.
" How cautious ſhould our ſex be of giv-
" ing way to ſo weak, ſo dangerous a
" propenſity as vanity! It was the ſource
" of my misfortunes and guilt. It has
" been the bane and deſtruction of the
" faireſt proſpect of happineſs that a
" woman could enjoy!

" HAD my conduct been actuated by
" prudence, or even policy, I ſhould in
" all probability have endeared myſelf
" to the heart of Lord Derville. The
" native goodneſs of his diſpoſition and
" his juſt principles would have led him
" to have eſteemed me, and I might
" have inſpired him with the tendereſt
" paſſion in my marriage with him—
" that is in having a magnificent eſta-
" bliſhment, having coronets on my car-
" raiges,

" riages, and an elegant houſe crouded
" with company—every wiſh of my
" heart was gratified. My huſband was
" a neceſſary appendage, that was how-
" ever the leaſt in my eſtimation. I re-
" garded him not—nor did I care what
" were his ſentiments of me, provided
" he never found fault with my conduct.

" From the moment I had given the
" hint of precaution to Colonel How-
" itzer, from that moment I was fully in
" his power. He artfully fought not to
" avail himſelf of it, till it was too
" much eſtabliſhed, and too habitual for
" me to make any reſiſtance to it. I
" ſeemed as if I directed him in every
" thing, while in reality I was only a
" puppet dancer on his wires. The
" gaiety of my behaviour took off all
" ſuſpicion, and I believe, giddy as every
" one thought me, no one ſuppoſed me
" capable of deep-laid ſchemes.

" My Lord was too indifferent to me
" to excite my jealous apprehenſions—
" Nor, I am convinced, did he ever in
" the ſlighteſt inſtances give me cauſe to
" feel any. I ſaw as every one did, the
" deference he paid your excellencies—

" but

" but I ſaw it with an undiſturbed repoſe.
" Your excellencies I envied not—nor
" cared I how much attention they
" claimed from men who were not at all
" to my taſte. For a long time I took
" little notice of Colonel Howitzer be-
" fore you, but I had many opportuni-
" ties of ſeeing him when you were not
" preſent, and then I availed myſelf of
" the reſtraint I had been before obliged
" to practiſe, and gave him all the free-
" dom he could wiſh. Though ſtill I
" fancied myſelf virtuous, becauſe in
" one inſtance I had not injured my huſ-
" band's honour.

" THE ſcheme of performing plays
" was, I thought, a moſt glorious one.
" Lord Carberry, a little time before we
" left Portman-ſquare, gave me a hint,
" that there was a warm attachment
" forming between you and my Lord
" Derville. He hoped it would not be
" carried to the utmoſt lengths, but he
" begged me to watch you with the
" greateſt ſcrutiny, but to be cautious of
" betraying my ſuſpicions. By this
" time I was ſo deeply inthralled with
" my paſſion for Howitzer, that I receiv-

" ed

" ed this piece of information with plea-
" ſure. I congratulated myſelf that you
" would be ſo much taken up with your
" new engagements, as would prevent
" your ſeeing any thing in my conduct
" —or, if you did, a conſciouſneſs of
" your own failings would make you in-
" dulgent to mine. The idea of acting
" plays was firſt ſtarted by the Colonel.
" He had a double view in it; it would
" make him a more frequent viſitor at our
" houſe, it would provide him with ma-
" ny opportunities of private converſa-
" tions with me, and it would lead to ſo
" much intimacy between you and Lord
" Derville, as might produce effects he
" wiſhed ſhould happen, in order to ac-
" celerate his ſchemes upon me.

" He curſed your prudery, as he called
" it, for requeſting the rehearſals might
" be always public. That yours was ſo
" with my lord I am entirely convinced,
" but to my ſhame I own ours were not
" always. Happy had it been for me if
" they had!

" You well remember how earneſt
" we all were for the day on which the
" Theatre was to be opened. The
" firſt

" firſt play was the Clandeſtine Marri-
" age, the ſecond was to be Tamerlane.
" In the evening preceding the com-
" mencement, this baſe man ſaid to me
" that we were not ſufficiently perfect
" in our parts in that tragedy, and urged
" me to go over a ſcene with him, and
" that it might be performed with
" greater ſucceſs it muſt be in the the-
" atre. I went with him into the room
" ſet for our entertainments, when in
" the moſt pathetic language he la-
" mented that the character of Moneſes
" had not been attached to him, and
" Arpaſia to me. He repeated ſome of
" the warmeſt lines in the part of Mo-
" neſes, and catching me in his arms,
" his careſſes, I bluſh to ſay, ſeemed to
" fire my ſoul. I felt an unuſual and
" guilty tranſport. Yet I had juſt virtue
" enough to burſt from him. My reſiſ-
" tance, which was however too faint,
" and too little in earneſt to repel his
" ardour, only called for more reſolu-
" tion on his ſide. He, as if by acci-
" dent, threw down the candle. My
" prudence, virtue and honour fell with
" it. My ſpirits were thrown into a tu-

" mult

" mult by an adventure that ought to
" have filled me with ſhame, and I be-
" lieve you may remember that I was
" more than commonly lively that night
" at ſupper. I went to bed with my
" head full of the idea of a man who I
" loved more than ever, and gave my-
" ſelf up to the guilty reſolution of in-
" dulging my illicit commerce, though
" with double caution, leſt a diſcovery
" ſhould preclude the enjoyment of it.

" The fatal circumſtance of the fire,
" which no doubt was the conſequence
" of his extinguiſhing the light in a hur-
" ry, and which had ſomehow commu-
" nicated a ſpark to part of the ſcenes,
" gave very little uneaſineſs to me, as
" I hoped we ſhould ſtill obtain ſome
" opportunities that would be favour-
" able to our intrigue. To prevail on
" me to bleſs him more frequently, as
" he ſtiled it, he laboured to convince
" me that you were equally culpable
" with myſelf, and that, if I would be
" diligent in my obſervation, I might
" eaſily detect you. I knew not any
" purpoſe it would anſwer, as I was as
" happy as my utmoſt wiſhes could de-
" ſire.

" ſire. And yet I ardently longed to
" have you as guilty as myſelf. I fan-
" cied then all the ſuperiority I could
" not but be ſenſible you juſtly merited,
" would ſink and we ſhould be on a
" level. But your virtue was not to be
" ſurpriſed, and the affection you in-
" ſpired, in the boſom of my huſband,
" was as pure as the object was lovely.
" I had then but one way, which was to
" undermine your reputation. I ſhould
" not however have been ſo execrably
" baſe, but from a circumſtance that
" filled me with diſmay. I found my
" guilty indulgence would be produc-
" tive of conſequences, which the man-
" ner of my having lived with Lord
" Derville ſince the birth of Auguſta
" would fix a ſuſpicion on me in his
" boſom. Our cuſtom had been ever to
" ſleep in different beds. In ſhort, my
" ſhame would have been notorious to
" him. I was not fully convinced of
" my ſituation, till the day before you
" went on the water. My lord remon-
" ſtrated to me on my imprudent con-
" duct. I felt too conſcious of the juſ-
" tice of his remarks, and wiſhed to

" make a quarrel. I threw out hints
" which his innocence prevented his
" applying to himſelf. I grew careleſs
" of my behaviour, as my only hopes
" then reſted on a detection, which
" would occaſion a divorce, and that I
" might have a chance of marrying the
" man I ſtill doated on to diſtraction.
" I told him how I was circumſtanced,
" and how I was likewiſe ſituated. I
" knew not how to proceed, at laſt I
" prevailed on him to elope with me. I
" wiſhed for nothing more than to have
" an uninterrupted intercourſe with
" him, fancying our raptures were to
" laſt for ever; and that a paſſion
" founded in guilt and infamy would
" continue its permanency and pleaſures
" as long as we lived. I believe I ſhould
" not have ſo readily made him adopt
" my ſcheme, but that I painted to him
" in pretty ſtrong colours my fixed opi-
" nion of Lord Derville never having
" recourſe to the law, while he could
" lift a ſword or draw a trigger. Not-
" withſtanding all his bluſter, I knew
" the Colonel was not deſirous of ha-
" zarding his life on equal terms.

" When

"WHEN I left our houſe at Brighton "to go to the maſk ball. I vowed to "Howitzer, I never would return to "it, and that the only means of eſcap- "ing the vengeance of my huſband was "to go off, and as we had previouſly "quarrelled, I ſhould never have ſo "good an opportunity of throwing the "blame on you and my lord's amour, "which had been propagated by Lady "Marſden, who had taken ſome pains "to find out your boatmen, and brib- "ing high, induced them to give ſuch a "relation to the affair of the ſtorm, that "every one paſſed their opinion freely "on the matter. The only act of pru- "dence I ever committed, was the hav- "ing no confidante of my intrigue— "but by that means I was without ſup- "plies—However the generoſity of my "lord, who over and above the very "ample and noble allowance I had, "frequently made me preſents, fur- "niſhed my purſe pretty well.—We "took paſſage for Dieppe, and made "our way to Paris—The frolick which "had given zeſt to the affair in the eyes "of the colonel ſoon was over—my

" fondneſs grew irkſome to him—His
" behaviour no longer had the charm I
" once diſcovered—Ill nature was viſi-
" ble in his whole deportment; we lived
" ſo much like man and wife, that he
" ſoon became quite the brutal huſband
" —Our finances grew ſhort, he curſed
" the hour he firſt became acquainted
" with me—I had no cauſe to hail it
" with bleſſings—We grew bad compa-
" ny to each other; he attached him-
" ſelf to every woman he could form
" hopes of.

" At Paris I met Sir James Hawley
" —His ſurprize at ſeeing me was as
" natural as great—Yet he had heard a
" confuſed account of my withdrawing
" myſelf from my family—I now hear-
" tily deſpiſed Howitzer, though I knew
" not how to break with him; and I
" hope I made ſome little atonement for
" my tranſgreſſions, by explaining to Sir
" James how groundleſs was the ill opi-
" nion he had taken up againſt my lord
" —For Howitzer had told me, the arti-
" fice of Lord Carberry, to inſpire him
" with the ſuſpicion that Lord Derville
" had prevented his ſuit being accep-

table

" table to you, by treacherouſly under-
" mining him in your opinion—I felt
" the injuſtice, and had ſtrength of mind
" ſufficient to clear his lordſhip, as I
" knew the whole of the tranſaction,
" and was perfectly convinced that my
" lord did himſelf a great violence in
" pleading his cauſe, and had conducted
" himſelf throughout the affair with the
" greateſt honour, at the ſame time aſ-
" ſuring him that I well knew you re-
" fuſed him on the nobleſt principles;
" the conviction that your heart was not
" enough ſenſible of his merit."

At this part of the relation, and indeed ever ſince the name of Sir James had been mentioned, poor Caroline's feelings can be eaſier gueſſed than deſcribed—Arpaſia ſaw her confuſion, and wiſhed to interrupt Charlotte, that ſhe might conſole her friend, whoſe agitation began to alarm her—but ſhe proceeded without taking notice of them—
" The affection that Sir James had ever
" borne my lord, ſeemed to be renewed
" at this intelligence, which he had no
" cauſe to doubt—He expreſſed his hap-
" pineſs on the occaſion, but ſaid al-

" though his eſteem for you had re-
" mained in its full force, yet he had
" conquered the more tender part of
" his ſentiment. He well knew there
" could be no felicity in the marriage
" ſtate, without a reciprocal union of
" hearts, and he ſhould with you have
" been wretched, unleſs he had obtained
" your whole affections. He further
" told me, that he believed he ſhould
" not much longer continue an alien to
" his country; he had lately received a
" proof, that a lovely girl whom he
" had once been very much attached to
" —and who only could be ſurpaſſed by
" Arpaſia, had done him the honour of
" diſtinguiſhing him in a very flattering
" manner. If he found he was really
" dear to her, he ſhould devote his whole
" life to make her happy."

THE ſuggeſtions this gave riſe to in the boſom of Arpaſia and her friend, were not likely to calm the perturbation of either—Charlotte went on.

" OUR diſagreements continued—Sir
" James kindly offered to mediate be-
" tween us—He offered too, to endea-
" vour to reconcile me to my family—

" but

" but that I rejected with firmneſs—We
" left Paris—In ſhort we could no longer
" live there—I fell ill, at a ſmall village
" near Blois—I knew not the nature of
" my diſorder, but learned from my
" phyſician, that I owed it to ſome bad
" connection which the Colonel had
" formed—In this wretched place, I was
" delivered of a dead child, and in theſe
" wretched circumſtances the baſe mon-
" ſter left me—I muſt have periſhed but
" for the charity of ſome of the Siſters
" of Mercy—When I was a little reſtor-
" ed, I fell into company with an officer,
" in the Iriſh Brigade—I had then no re-
" ſource from a life of infamy, and I am
" ſorry to ſay, little inclination likewiſe;
" we lived together ſometimes; but my
" health had been ſo injured, that I ne-
" ver regained it—This young man was
" broke for ill behaviour, and we em-
" barked together for Ireland, where he
" hoped to get ſome employment—But
" his relations being rigorous in their
" principles, would do nothing for him
" while he continued his connection with
" me—It was an eaſy ſacrifice, for he
" was tired of his companion. Poverty,

" diſgrace and every evil of life ſeemed
" now to overtake me, and a ſevere ill-
" neſs again attacked me.

" HUMANITY conducted me to an hoſ-
" pital, where parſimony diſcharged me,
" while almoſt too weak to crawl—The
" viſitation of ſickneſs had been ſer-
" viceable to me, inaſmuch as it awak-
" ened in my ſoul a ſenſe of my wick-
" edneſs—I deplored my crimes with the
" bittereſt tears, and hoped to expiate
" them by patiently ſubmitting to my
" grievous ſufferings, without murmur-
" ing—By charitable donations, I pro-
" cured a paſſage in the ſteerage of a
" packet boat, among the loweſt crew
" of Iriſh—I determined to beg my way
" to my father; I hoped his heart would
" melt at my diſtreſs, and allow me a
" decent place to die in. I was on my
" way when you with the goodneſs of
" an angel ſuçcoured me—Oh! that I
" had never left your ſheltering wing!—
" That I had followed your precepts,
" then had I been virtuous and happy—
" but I was doomed to wickedneſs and
" diſtreſs, that your character might re-
" ceive the higheſt excellence that mor-

" tal

" tal can attain, of forgiveneſs of inju-
" ries, and ſupporting thoſe who have
" cruelly and deſpitefully uſed us."

HER ſtrength was nearly exhauſted from the fatigue of her relation—and the doctor pronounced her end very near.—Arpaſia ſaid the moſt conſoling and comforting things to her, and in aid of her pious intentions ſent for a divine, to pour into the almoſt deſpairing boſom of the wretched penitent, the balm of hope—That night ſhe had a convulſive fit, which was a ſure prognoſtic of her ſpeedy diſſolution—A meſſenger arrived the next morning with a letter from Lady Anne—It ſpoke peace to the departing ſpirit of Charlotte—It aſſured her ſhe was forgiven, and that in a day's time, ſhe with her huſband, if the ſight was not too painful, would be at her bedſide—She lifted up her dying eyes, and bleſſed them, calling for double bleſſings on Arpaſia, who had been the means of ſo much comfort to her in her laſt moments—She ſaid, ſhe was well aſſured ſhe ſhould not live over the day, and ſhe feared if they ſhould come, the agitation would hurt her too much—as ſhe was

aſſured of their forgiveneſs, ſhe ſhould die in peace.

SHE ſtrongly recommended her child to the care of Arpaſia, intreating her to be a mother to it, and repeatedly ſaid—"Oh be its mother intirely—let me die "in the hope, you will be, for many, "many years the happieſt of women, "and that you will make the worthieſt, "of men, the happieſt likewiſe—none "but you can do ſo."

As ſhe predicted, ſo it happened; towards the cloſe of the day, ſhe grew viſibly altered—Her countenance changed, her ſpeech faultered, and the convulſive ſpaſms became more frequent—She was ſenſible to the laſt, and in words ſcarcely articulate, begged to die, where it had been happy ſhe had ever lived, in the arms of virtue and heavenly goodneſs—Arpaſia ſupported herſelf through this awful ſcene, with the utmoſt heroiſm, ſuppreſſing her feelings to comfort and ſuſtain her dying friend—whoſe laſt looks were bent on her, whoſe laſt breath expired in a bleſſing for her!!

WHEN the aweful ſcene was cloſed for ever, Arpaſia gave her directions for the funeral,

funeral, and took a melancholy departure to the caſtle, writing at the firſt ſtage, and diſpatching expreſſes, to prevent the friends of the departed penitent from proſecuting their now fruitleſs journey.

CAROLINE was almoſt a ſilent ſpectator of this buſineſs—Her mind was torn with a thouſand doubts, which Arpaſia perceived, and by a free communication of all that had paſſed relative to Sir James and herſelf, relieved the anxiety of her friend as much as ſhe was able—and a letter which they found lying for them at the caſtle, did all the reſt—It was from her couſin Brandon, who had taken a trip to Paris, to ſee his old friend Hawley—by inadvertently dropping a letter he had received from one of his ſiſters, and which Sir James found, and ſeeing his name in it, he could not reſiſt reading it; he diſcovered the partiality of Caroline, which in confidence Miſs Brandon told her brother, was the cauſe of her refuſing a very advantageous match—He was conſcious that his behaviour had been equivocal—Her image returned to his idea in all its native beauty

beauty—and he determined to make an offer of his heart and hand to the lovely girl, whoſe tender affection he was ſo well convinced he poſſeſſed.

CAROLINE's delicacy ſuffered much under the idea of her attachment, being thus obvious to her couſin, and through his means being diſcovered to the object of it—She thought too, there was an impropriety in Sir James having read the letter, dropped by accident—Her mind was too much agitated to admit the flatterer, hope, in her heart—"Oh!" ſhe cried, "I can never be happy, if I "have the leaſt reaſon to believe a mo- "tive of compaſſion has actuated my "couſin to appeal to the feelings and "ſenſe of honour in Sir James Haw- "ley."

ARPASIA took the utmoſt pains to reconcile her friend to the proſpect of happineſs which opened to her view, and urged her not to caſt it away or overcloud it with ſuſpicions injurious to ſo amiable a man.—She had ever poſſeſſed an eſteem for Sir James, and felt doubly happy in herſelf, that an union moſt probably would take place between perſons

ſons ſo deſerving of her friendſhip, which had the proper foundation for a laſting affection—However, ſhe determined her Caroline ſhould not be a deſtitute bride—and haſtened a ſettlement ſhe had from the intimate knowledge of her worth ever deſigned her—Her poſſeſſions were large—The landed eſtate was five thouſand per annum clear, beſides what ſhe had already diſpoſed of in favour of the Hanburys, there was upwards of forty thouſand pounds in the funds—and although her eſtabliſhment was equal to her fortune, yet as prudence and œconomy were ſtrictly attended to, there was no waſte—no unneceſſary profuſion by which her circumſtances could be involved or deranged—No extravagance either in dreſs or equipage—She kept up the number of ſervants her grandfather had done, and the ſame hoſpitality—but the firſt were well regulated, and the latter was within proper bounds—like a flowing ſtream, equal and though diffuſive, never riſing above a certain degree.

A DEED of ſettlement was in the ſweeteſt and moſt affectionate manner, preſented

preſented to her dear Caroline, of ten thouſand pounds—It is in vain to attempt a deſcription of the emotions her generoſity excited in the boſom of her grateful friend—Her pleaſure could only be equalled by that of Arpaſia's. A generous action performed with the grace which accompanied all hers, never depreſſes the heart, which too often ſinks with the inferiority it feels while it is obliged—Every one who received a benefit from Arpaſia, found theirs expand, and themſelves raiſed even in their own idea——They could not help thinking they had contributed to her happineſs, and the luſtre of her animated countenance confirmed them in their opinion—Why ſhould corroding care ever aſſail ſuch a boſom?—Why, when her benevolent heart ſeemed but to beat for the advantage of others——why ſhould it heave the deep ſigh, and feel ſo ſeverely its own wretchedneſs?—Its own incapacity of enjoying happineſs—Yet it was ſo, internally a prey to the moſt anxious painful inquietudes——She ſought, and only found relief in making others happy

happy—herſelf far, oh! how far removed from the proſpect of it!

The ſad fate of Lady Derville, dwelt on her mind, and how much diſtreſs ſhe herſelf had encountered in conſequence of Charlotte's ill conduct, made a moſt ſenſible impreſſion on her—She revolved in her idea, through many a ſleepleſs night the various circumſtances and events that had led to a friendſhip deſtructive to her repoſe—She wept over the deſtiny of the wretched Charlotte, who had been from early childhood dear to her memory, and who, had her mind been ſtored with prudence, might have lived an honour, inſtead of being a diſgrace to all her family—She rejoiced however that it had been her good fortune to adminiſter comforts to the dying penitent, and ſoften as much as poſſible the calamities brought on her by ungovernable folly and licentious example—Her thoughts frequently reverted to the conduct of Derville; had he not by a ſtrange depravity of proceeding intirely obliterated the eſteem ſhe once cheriſhed for him, what an opening had the death of Charlotte preſented to their

their view of ending their days together! She could not but lament, that his hand had for ever fixed a barrier to their meeting on any terms—She never could forget, ſhe neither could or ever ought to pardon the cruel inſult he had offered her honour, by his baſe propoſals—How was it poſſible that a man ſo very amiable as he always appeared, and ſo much under the guidance of reaſon, as on a very trying occaſion to propoſe ſelf-baniſhment; how could he ſo far forget himſelf and what he owed her ſituation, as to write ſuch a letter?—How is it that the heart of man can be ſo ſtrangely inconſiſtent! why will they rob us of the dear delight of glorying in our attachment to them! why will they fill our hearts with ſorrow, and deprive us of the conſolation amidſt all our diſappointments, of being able to whiſper to ourſelves—"Though I am for ever ſeparated by "adverſe fortune from the object of my "tender regard, ſtill he is worthy of "it—ſtill my heart may indulge its pro-"penſity—for in loving him, I prove "myſelf capable of eſteeming all the "virtues which centre in him!"

CHAP.

CHAP. LXII.

A Renewal of Acquaintance.

A DIFFICULTY aroſe in the mind of Caroline, about the propriety of receiving the addreſſes of Sir James Hawley at Hanbury Caſtle. Perhaps too ſhe might feel a ſentiment ſhe bluſhed to encourage, and yet knew not how to diveſt herſelf of. A little apprehenſion that the charms of a woman who had once enſnared his heart, and who now ſhone in the full blaze of ſplendour, would again prove too powerful to be reſiſted. Arpaſia ſoothed her fears, though ſhe herſelf rather adviſed the affair might be negociated either at Brandon Lodge, or the Parſonage. Caroline knew not how to quit her beloved friend, to whom herſelf and family owed ſo much. The conflict diſtreſſed her gentle heart. She doubted her own influence over the affections of Sir James. She could hardly be brought to give credit to the aſſertion that any man whoſe boſom had burnt for Arpaſia, could

could ever forget her, and admit another paſſion for one ſo much inferior; and ſhe almoſt thought, tho' ſhe loved him for his partiality, ſhe eſteemed him leſs for being capable of change, notwithſtanding it was ſo much in her own particular favour.

A LETTER was forwarded to her by way of Brandon Lodge, from Sir James, who knew not of her preſent reſidence. He was explicitneſs itſelf. He recapitulated the impreſſion her perſon and ſweetneſs of manners had made on his heart on their firſt acquaintance; but at that time frankly owned he had little inclination for the married ſtate, though honouring it much, and meaning one time or other to become a member of it. That, on his return to town, at his friend Lord Derville's he became acquainted with a moſt angelic creature, whoſe ſtory had intereſted his feelings, and whoſe beauty and amiable virtues inſpired him with the utmoſt eſteem and veneration. He thought he ſhould be the happieſt of men to impreſs her with the ſame ideas of him. He ſaw her ſurrounded with admirers, who ſhe had from

from the nobleſt motives rejected. Some circumſtances induced him to hope, he ſhould not be on that liſt; and in that hope he had offered himſelf to her acceptance. His hope, however, fell to the ground, and the diſappointment ſtruck to his heart. The poignancy was heightened by his being inſtigated to believe he had been treacherouſly dealt with by his old friend, whom he had ever loved with the utmoſt regard. His frequent ruminations on a hopeleſs paſſion, and the conduct in the lady which had cheriſhed his hopes (though he juſtified her by ſaying, it was his own conſtruction on her general politeneſs of diſpoſition that had drawn him into this belief) naturally made him turn his thoughts to Brandon Lodge. He began to doubt whether his mode of behaviour might not have encouraged, in ſo inexperienced and gentle a heart, an idea that all that had paſſed was not the mere effect of unmeaning gallantry. He condemned himſelf for perhaps having diſturbed the repoſe of an innocent and lovely girl, and placed in her boſom ſtings which he too keenly felt in his own.

own. He drew a compariſon on the ſufferings of two perſons of different ſexes from the ſame cauſe. He, as a man, could fly to a variety of objects and places to divert, if not eradicate his paſſion; while a tender female in the ſame predicament ſmothers her ſighs, and conſumes inwardly without complaining, or daring to whiſper even to the boſom of confidential friendſhip the woes with which her heart is burſting. "Oh!" cried he, "If I have cauſed "ſuch miſery to any earthly being, "what a monſter I am!—But if I have "drawn the picture of the amiable Ca-"roline Brandon, how ſhould I deteſt "myſelf—and how anxious ſhould I be "to repair the ravages which my fool-"iſh reprehenſible conduct may have "made in her excellent heart!" Such, he ſaid, were his reflections when Brandon met him at Paris.

He felt a pleaſure in talking over the tranſactions of the Lodge during the Eaſter receſs, and earneſtly enquired after the lovely Caroline, who he grieved to hear had fallen into ill health, and who in that ſtate was forced to attend her

her ſick mother. Sometime after, Brandon had a letter from his ſiſter. He read part of it to Sir James, mentioning the dejection of Caroline's ſpirits, and her refuſal of a marriage with a young man of good fortune, declaring her fixed reſolution of never entering into that ſtate, which Miſs Brandon interpreted into a too partial attachment to ſome one, more than any averſion to the married life. It was evident to Sir James, that the name of the ſuſpected perſon occurred in the letter, tho' Mr. Brandon refuſed to repeat it. Near a week after he paſſed into his friend's dreſſing-room, whom he found in the act of anſwering this very letter. Without meaning to look over his papers, he inadvertently ſaw his own name. Curioſity too powerful to be reſiſted, and he hoped he might be allowed to ſay a better motive, urged him to lay his hand on the wiſhed-for letter—and tell Brandon, between jeſt and earneſt, he muſt indulge him with the peruſal of it. Brandon told him, he relied too much on his honour to have any unneceſſary ſcruples about ſhewing it to him. At the ſame time

ſaying

ſaying he would be the guardian of the dear girl's honour, who he wiſhed loved *him* as much as ſhe perhaps unfortunately did a man, whoſe ſentiments were otherwiſe diſpoſed of.

Sir JAMES confeſſed he never felt more delight than when he found himſelf the object of the tender regard of the woman in the world who was moſt likely to make him happy, but that he almoſt doubted himſelf whether his cure was perfected. He had determined to examine his heart thoroughly, and to be convinced that it was truly devoted to her before he would allow himſelf to offer his hand. He begged her to believe it was entirely attached to her alone, and that her acceptance was neceſſary to form his felicity, which he ardently hoped would be the ſureſt means of conſtituting hers.

THESE aſſurances were likely to remove all her ſcruples, and now ſhe gave way to the pleaſing hope that her union with the man of her choice would not be a barrier againſt her continued intimacy with the friend of her heart. She was preparing to ſend an anſwer to this long

long letter, when her attention was called from the ſubject by the ſound of a carriage, which drove up to the door—and in which ſhe ſaw, though ſhe could hardly believe the information of her eyes, the very identical perſon whoſe image had never left her heart, together with her couſin Louiſa Brandon. Arpaſia was juſt croſſing the hall to go into the library where Caroline was ſeated, with her face pale as aſhes, and her whole frame ſhaking like one under the paroxyſm of an ague. The ſtrangers were announced before Arpaſia could inſpire her friend with the ſmalleſt particle of courage.

"WILL the amiable Miſs Hanbury," ſaid Sir James, "admit me as a viſit-
"or?"

"THE moſt welcome one," ſhe cried, extending her hand to him, "that could
"honour my dwelling. I am happy
"that I now can tell you how much I
"eſteem you, and that I can at the ſame
"time help to reward your merit. My
"ſweet friend is a little overcome. Will
"you ſuffer me to treat you like an old
"acquaintance, and leave you without
"ceremony,

" ceremony, while I do the honours of " the houſe to this lady."

SAYING which, ſhe took the hand of Miſs Brandon; and, with a charming ſmile, begged to lead her to a room where they ſhould meet with ſome refreſhment.

LOUISA informed Arpaſia, that as ſoon as Sir James heard of the intimate friendſhip that ſubſiſted between her and Caroline, he was impatient to come to the Caſtle, that he might convince his lovely girl of the confidence he had in himſelf. And indeed he felt no outward perturbation on the rencontre, he had quite conquered the painful part of his predilection, and the ſentiments he now felt for Arpaſia were ſuch as Caroline could not have eſteemed in him had he ſought to deſtroy them.

IN a little time he led Caroline, at her own deſire, to the room where the ladies were. Never had ſhe appeared half ſo pleaſing in his eyes. Love begets love. He experienced the delight of being moſt truly beloved, and his heart was formed to be grateful for the bleſſing. He paſſed two days with them, the family at the Par-

Parſonage joining the party at the Caſtle. Then in order to expedite matters he ſet off for London, firſt remonſtrating a little with Arpaſia on her needleſs bounty to Caroline, which he wiſhed her to reſume. That was however impoſſible for him to obtain. He was as urgent in refuſing to receive any thing but the hand and heart of the woman of his free choice. At laſt they compriſed the matter. "It is her "own," ſaid Arpaſia—"If you will not "receive it, ſhe has ſiſters who may not "meet the ſame good fortune ſhe has "done." The hint was enough—her two ſiſters were preſented with five thouſand pounds each, from their generous brother-in-law expectant.

WHAT a happy family were the Brandons! lifted from poverty to plenty, and with hearts that equally ſupported them with dignity and propriety in each ſtation they had experienced—Arpaſia felt infinitely happy too; the preparations for the wedding which was to be celebrated at the caſtle, employed all their time, and calling for all her attention, left her little room for reflection.

THE caſtle was now quite alive—Arpaſia invited the families from Brandon Lodge and the Parſonage, to be preſent at the nuptials of her friend, which were to be celebrated in a ſhort time—Sir James Hawley made one of the party, previous to the ceremony, as often as he could, having ſeveral things to adjuſt, as they purpoſed going to Hawley Place ſoon after their marriage, and as he had reſided but little at that houſe, it required ſome preparation for its future miſtreſs.

As the various buſineſs would take ſome time to be arranged, it was at length agreed the marriage ſhould take place, and the bride folk continue gueſts at the caſtle till after the 24th of October, which day compleated the 21ſt year of Arpaſia's life.

THE tenantry had long looked for an æra of ſuch feſtivity, and Arpaſia ever indulgent to the wiſhes of every one, was reſolved to ſhew by her compliance, her intire ſatisfaction of their conduct in the ſphere of life they had been caſt in.

THE latter end of Auguſt, ſhe had the happineſs of beholding the union of her two friends——The ceremony was performed

formed by the delighted father, and the harmony and peace which ſhone forth in the features of every one, was the ſureſt prognoſtic of the marriage being productive of the trueſt felicity to all.

CHAP. LXIII.

The Friendly Attempt.

THE feſtivity at the caſtle, in conſequence of the wedding, laſted a week—Balls, concerts, and a variety of amuſements filled up the ſpace, till the Brandon family returned to the Lodge—But happineſs ſtill continued an inmate of the Caſtle, though quiet ſucceeded to the tuneful lyre and ſprightly dance.

ONE morning Sir James Hawley, after dwelling on the proſpect of laſting felicity which his marriage had afforded him—told Arpaſia, he felt his heart expanded ſo much by experiencing happineſs, that he wiſhed to ſee all mankind happy, and his own bliſs could feel no alloy, but that of ſeeing one whom he loved and honoured to the higheſt degree, ſinking under an inward diſquiet—"Will you, "my amiable friend," he continued "allow me to have ſome ſerious converſation with you?—I have often been "urged to requeſt it; but in the midſt of "the

" the agreeable racket, which my union
" with this dear girl has occaſioned, no
" opportunity has offered; will you now
" permit me to enter on a ſubject very
" near my heart?"

" I THINK I can have no objection to
" hear you on any ſubject, Sir James—
" There is but one," ſaid ſhe, ſighing—
" that I ſhould be inclined to interdict—
" and I hope you know my mind too
" ſufficiently, (as I know my dear Caro-
" line has had ſome converſation with
" you on that head,) to remind you how
" unpleaſant a one it will be to me."

" I POSITIVELY will make no bar-
" gain," ſaid he.

LADY HAWLEY roſe, ſaying, " I will
" leave you to ſettle your differences,
" good people — You will be able to
" manage matters without me."

" NOT ſo, my deareſt Caroline," ſaid Sir James—" you muſt aſſiſt my cauſe."

" AND who ſo well can plead?"—replied Caroline.

" No, you muſt not leave me," cried Arpaſia—" I begin to be terrified by the
" ſolemnity of Sir James's countenance
" —Yet if it is on the ſubject my fore-

" boding heart predicts, the conference
" will be ſoon over, and now let the
" commencement take place."

" YOUR allowing me to begin on a ſub-
" ject you already pronounce againſt, I
" ſhall interpret in my favour, I aſſure
" you—There was once a time, my
" dear Miſs Hanbury, when an unfortu-
" nate friend of mine, at my earneſt re-
" queſt, undertook to plead my cauſe
" with you—The ill-ſucceſs of it I fool-
" iſhly then attributed to his want of
" zeal—Indeed I ſhould not have taken
" up ſuch an idea, had it not been art-
" fully infuſed into my mind by a man,
" I am ſorry to name, as he bears the
" neareſt relationſhip to my excellent
" friend.

" WHEN from the free communicati-
" on of Lady Derville in Paris, a mat-
" ter was cleared up that had threatened
" an eternal diſunion between her Lord
" and me, I wrote immediately to him,
" to apologize for the unfriendly ſuſpici-
" ons I had too long entertained of his
" treachery.—His anſwer was ſuch, as
" endeared him ſtill more to my affecti-
" ons and reaſon—When I had the ho-

" nour

" nour of paying my reſpects to you
" here, I took the firſt opportunity of
" going to London, to embrace my dear
" Derville, and enjoy the felicity of an
" intercourſe I had been ſome months
" deprived of—But oh! how was my
" heart affected with the change I per-
" ceived in him!—His elegant, beauti-
" ful perſon—You, my dear Caroline,
" recollect him at the Lodge—his ani-
" mated features all ſunk and loſt—a de-
" jection rooted in his countenance, and
" as he ſaid every idea of comfort and
" hope for ever fled from him—I intreat-
" ed him to unboſom himſelf to me, to
" pour into my faithful heart all his ſor-
" rows—Alas! what a melancholy cata-
" logue!—But the cord that wound
" round his heart ſtraining it to torture,
" I found was the rigour with which the
" moſt amiable, the moſt gentle of her
" ſex, in all other inſtances inflicted on
" him."

" ARPASIA roſe, much agitated, ſhe walked about the room—" Excuſe me, " Sir James, I cannot hear you on this " ungrateful theme."

"NEVER, my dear madam," cried he, taking her hand, "never will I, from "this day renew it, if you will but al- "low me now to proceed" — She ſat down, but ſo much diſcompoſed, that ſhe was forced to take out her bottle of ſalts to keep her from fainting.

"I URGED him," continued Sir James, "to relate to me the circumſtance by "which he had incurred your diſplea- "ſure to ſuch a degree, as to reduce "you to the utmoſt danger and hazard "to avoid the ſight of him—He ſwore "by the moſt ſacred powers, that as no- "thing could equal the fervency of his "affection for you, but its purity, ſo it "was impoſſible his heart could ſuggeſt "any idea injurious to you—He owned, "that in a moment of deſpair, he had "diſcloſed his unhappy paſſion, but "with the generoſity of an angel you "had pardoned his involuntary crime."

"I DID ſo" ſaid Arpaſia, "and dear- "ly ſince has he made me repent my "too ready condeſcenſion—The offence "was involuntary, and for that reaſon, "when he prudently reſolved to avoid "the evil, by flying far from me, I

"freely

"freely acknowledge I forgave him—I "will as freely acknowledge to you, "that the whole ſcheme of happineſs I "wiſhed to enjoy was believing him "worthy of my eſteem—I revered his "character—And why ſhould I diſown "it"—ſhe added, the tears falling from her lovely eyes—"I erected a throne for "his virtues in my boſom—and vowed "it never ſhould be diſplaced."

"Good God!" exclaimed Sir James, "and what ſacrilegious hand could dare "deſtroy it! who could have power to "diveſt you of ſuch a partiality?"

"Not the whole univerſe combined, "could have done it," ſhe replied, with energy—"No one could have had the "power—but himſelf—Oh! Sir James! "you ought to have ſpared me this diſ- "treſs," ſhe continued, burſting into a freſh flood of tears—"Fool that I am! "why cannot I ſupport myſelf with "ſome degree of firmneſs? Why does "not the reſolution which is for ever "fixed in my heart, animate my frame, "and repreſs theſe tears?"

"Indeed this is too much for her," ſaid Caroline, "my beloved Arpaſia,

"you ſhall not be thus urged," continued ſhe, throwing her arms round her neck and ſhedding the ſympathiſing tear.

Sir James too was extremely moved —"My confidence," ſaid he, "in my "deareſt Derville is ſo deeply rooted, "that I can hardly be brought to credit "the poſſibility of his being guilty of a "premeditated offence againſt any one "—Is it impoſſible, my dear Miſs Han-"bury, but that your delicate apprehen-"ſion may not have taken ſomething "amiſs that yet might bear ſome exte-"nuation?"

"You plead well, Sir James," returned Arpaſia, a little recovered—"and "wiſh to prove an error—Once he had "an advocate in my boſom, I bluſh to "own it, that ſought to vindicate him— "That time is paſt. There is now ſcarce "any man in the world ſo indifferent to "me, as he is—I wiſh not to think of "him; let him from this time never be a "ſubject for our diſcuſſion."

She then broke up the conference, and retired with more compoſure in her countenance than in her heart, to her own cloſet—The converſation had awakened

ened all the ſtreams of torture in her ſoul. As ſhe ſaid, *ſhe wiſhed not to think of him*, and grateful was ſhe to any incident that kept her mind fully employed. Even this converſation lowered him ſtill more in her eſtimation; it ſhewed a depravity of heart, that the baſeneſs of his propoſal had not ſhocked him; and that to his boſom friend he ſhould not think it of ſufficient importance to relate as the moſt likely means of having offended her—There was a ſeeming duplicity in his conduct, as placed him in a very unfavourable point of view, and the circumſtance itſelf was too humiliating for her to be more explicit on to a man. There appeared ſo much indelicacy on the face of it, than ſhe had never even to Caroline expoſed the letter, ſo fatal to her peace—She only informed her, that Lord Derville had ſought to debaſe her in her own eyes, and vainly hoped to eſtabliſh his ſucceſs with her, by proving ſhe was no longer an object of his eſteem, though ſhe might be of an illicit paſſion.

Sir James had then no clue to guide him by but this laſt hint which Lady Hawley

Hawley furniſhed him with—He was extremely zealous in the cauſe of his friend, and wiſhed at the ſame time to reſtore eaſe to the heart of Arpaſia, which he plainly ſaw, under all her efforts to conceal it, was torn aſunder with corroding anguiſh—He hoped too ſhe might be more explicit to Lady Anne, of whoſe great and delicate notions of propriety ſhe was ſo well acquainted; without then ſaying any thing to his wife of the particular buſineſs which called him to town, he pleaded abſolute neceſſity of being abſent two or three days, and away he poſted to her ladyſhip, to whom he related every circumſtance, and again entreated Lord Derville to re-trace all his former behaviour, if poſſible, to form a conjecture of the cauſe of Arpaſia's ſteady adherence to the reſolutions of never again ſeeing him.

On the moſt ſtrict ſcrutiny, they could find nothing that in a mind ſo well ſtored with ſenſe as Arpaſia's, could have any plea for ſuch ſeverity. Her perſevering ſilence too, perplexed them very much —Lady Anne moſt readily undertook the

the taſk of endeavouring to elucidate the matter—" and I promiſe you, my lord," ſaid ſhe, " if I find the dear girl has " juſt cauſe for her indignation, I will " protect her from any further ſolicita- " tions on this head."

Mr. Travers, who anxiouſly longed to ſee his ſweet Arpaſia, would accompany his ſiſter, and to crown the whole, dear little Auguſta, who was now a year and half old, was to be of the party. All things thus arranged, Sir James returned to the caſtle, ſtill keeping his journey to London a profound ſecret—The day after his return, he ſlily prevailed on Arpaſia to take a ride, that the reinforcement from town might have made their *entrée* and ſecured a lodgement in the caſtle, while the governeſs was abſent —Matters turned out to his wiſh—and the firſt object that ſtruck Arpaſia's eyes, when ſhe diſmounted from her horſe, was the little Auguſta, whoſe features were too dear to her memory not to be inſtantly recognized—She tottered and trembled, hardly able to ſupport herſelf into the hall, where in a moment ſhe was claſped in the arms of Lady

Anne

Anne—Her ſpirits were fluttered to ſuch a degree, that ſhe could ſcarcely be kept from fainting—Mr. Travers would come in for his ſhare—He kiſſed her pale cheek with the affection of a parent—Arpaſia immediately ſaw the whole plot of Sir James, and feared there was ſtill an ambuſcade, which however ſhe would not eaſily have pardoned.

"My ſweet young friend," ſaid Lady Anne—"I could no longer reſiſt the "wiſh to ſee you—My brother, who "you know has long loved you, would "indulge me with this jaunt—and I hope "the poor little girl who was once ſo "dear to you is no unpleaſant addition "to our party."

ARPASIA, while ſhe preſſed the beloved Auguſta to her boſom, who returned her careſſes and had been taught to pronounce her name, very gratefully acknowledged her ſenſe of Lady Anne's kindneſs, who had come thus far out of pure friendſhip to ſee her; for although Arpaſia well enough underſtood that they really meant to beſiege her in her fortreſs, yet from the high opinion ſhe entertained of Lady Anne's notions of female

female delicacy, ſhe knew ſhe ſhould ſoon gain her over to her party—and to her ſhe was determined to have no reſerves, as the clearing up what appeared an obſtinacy in her temper, would effectually eſtabliſh her Ladyſhip her friend, and for ever preclude any further perſecution on that head. The day paſſed off very well—there was no diſagreeable recrimination on either ſide—They ſeemed perfectly glad to ſee each other, and in fact were ſo to a very great degree.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXIV.

A freſh Inſtance of the Depravity of Human Nature.

IMMEDIATELY after breakfaſt the next day, Lady Anne took Arpaſia under the arm, and requeſted her to ſhew her the Park—They chatted on indifferent ſubjects, till they gained a little receſs, when her ladyſhip propoſed reſting—She there entered on a converſation, which it was plain to ſee her heart was deeply intereſted in, and which Arpaſia received with leſs perturbation than ſhe could almoſt have hoped, but it proceeded from her determination of putting an effectual ſtop to the reſuming it from any quarter, by ſhewing the cauſe that had induced her to act as ſhe had done.

LADY ANNE with great addreſs began the converſation, by lamenting the many diſtreſſing occurrences that had interrupted an intercourſe which had afforded her ſo much delight; and ſaid, ſhe doubted not but there had been ſufficient

cient reaſon on the ſide of a woman whoſe actions had ever been guided by that principle—And in ſhort, by ſeemingly juſtifying the rigour of Arpaſia, artfully enough impreſſed her with the idea that ſhe knew ſomething more of the matter than ſhe really explained—Arpaſia had pre-determined to be explicit with her venerable friend; ſhe freely owned the regard ſhe had once entertained for his lordſhip—The friendſhip ſhe gloried in feeling for him, and which the amiable qualities ſhe fancied he poſſeſſed ſeemed juſtly to authorize—But it was plain how ignorant ſhe was of the nature of man, and how fallacious her idea of his worth had been "—I was charmed "with the idea" ſhe cried "that he "reſpected me—that I had inſpired him "with eſteem, and that tho' even a leſs "ſerene paſſion unhappily poſſeſſed his "boſom, it was yet under the guidance "of reaſon and rectitude—Oh! how "my heart was broken with anguiſh, "even to the impairing my reaſon, and "driving me headlong to the very verge "of deſtruction, when I was too fatal-"ly convinced his mind was actuated by

"the

" the baſeſt principles—When he could " dare to inſult the ſituation he ought " to have reſpected, and ſink me ſo low " in my own eyes, as to ſolicit my con- " ſent—Oh ! my dear Lady Anne" ſhe continued, hiding her face on her boſom, and watering it with her tears— " can I relate to you the cruel conduct " of your darling nephew ?"

" NEPHEW !" repeated Lady Anne— " No, I abjure the relationſhip !—He " has deceived me—He vowed he never " made a ſingle effort to ſee you ſince " you parted at Brighton—How has he " dared to urge me to inſult you with " ſolicitations for forgiveneſs and accept- " ance ?"

" OH ! I ſaw him not—I know not " that he attempted to ſee me—For I " left Hornchurch in conſequence of the " impious letter. Judge, my dear " madam, what a heart, like mine, " muſt feel on peruſing ſuch an atroci- " ous inſult to virtue and honour."

WITH a trembling hand, ſhe opened her pocket-book, from whence ſhe drew the fatal ſcroll that had embittered ſo many of her days, and threatened to cloud

cloud all the ſucceeding ones—She put it into the hands of Lady Anne, while to recover herſelf a little, ſhe walked out of the Temple into the air.

LADY ANNE haſtily unfolded the guilty paper—Her eyes ſkimmed over the lines; ſhe ſaw the name of Derville at the bottom—She felt ſtruck with horror—She called Arpaſia!—Arpaſia, with her eyes all red with weeping, and a face with all its colour and ſpirit fled, ſlowly returned at the ſound of her name—"My deareſt child," cried Lady Anne, burſting into tears, and throwing her arms round her waiſt, "this in-"famous ſcroll is no more Derville's "writing than it is yours."

"IMPOSSIBLE!" exclaimed Arpaſia—"Where is the wretch who could be "equal to ſuch a vile forgery?"

"I TOO well know," replied ſhe—"Oh! my God," ſhe continued, ſinking on her knees "I thank you with my "whole heart for ſparing it this heavy "affliction—tho' it fixes the baſeſt infa-"my on one, who ſtands in ſo ſacred a "character as father to the injured Der-"ville!"

"OH!

"OH! clear him but from this of-
"fence," cried Arpaſia, claſping her hands together "—Prove that he is in-
"nocent—that he is ſtill worthy of my
"eſteem—deprive me of every other
"comfort of life, but that dear certain-
"ty, and I could bleſs you for ever!"

"I AM certain I can do ſo," cried Lady Anne—"I have ſeveral letters from him
"in my pocket—Tell me, my dear, did
"you ever ſee his writing?"

"NEVER!" anſwered ſhe, "unleſs
"that deteſtable letter is his writing."

"No, I will pawn my ſoul's eternal
"happineſs it is not—we will compare
"it with a note which my brother re-
"ceived the other day, from that vileſt
"of all men, Lord Carberry—I could
"ſwear to his hand at any time."—The conflict of ſenſations in the boſom of Arpaſia became almoſt too powerful; but her tears relieved her—She could hardly credit her ſenſes; the aſſertion of Lady Anne ſeemed even too marvellous to be believed—She felt ſo delighted at the idea that there was a poſſibility of clearing Lord Derville from this heavy accuſation,

accuſation, and yet ſhe dared hardly give way to her hopes.

Lady ANNE hurried her into the houſe, when the truth of the matter was too inconteſtibly cleared to ſuffer a doubt to hang on the mind of Arpaſia, except that ſhe had had a letter ſometime before from Lord Carberry. Amongſt her papers ſhe found it; and, though the writing was a little diſguiſed, it was plain enough to ſee the ſame hand had deſcribed the characters. There was however ſufficient evidence to prove the letter was not written by Lord Derville, and Mr. Travers was half wild with joy. Hope ſat trembling in the eyes of Arpaſia, while Lady Anne exulted in the certainty that her beloved nephew was cleared from ſo foul an imputation, though they ſcrupled not to agree in giving Arpaſia full credit for the propriety of her reſentment, when under the idea of his lordſhip being capable of acting ſo unworthily by her. They felicitated themſelves on this material diſcovery in which they all took ſo great a ſhare, particularly Sir James—"Was "not my ſcheme a good one," ſaid he,

"of

"of bringing this reinforcement down "to the Caſtle? But for that we "ſhould ſtill have remained quite in the "dark—and the hour of happineſs, "which I hope is not far off, might "without the aid of Lady Anne have "never arrived."

"WHERE is my brother?" cried her ladyſhip. In a minute the old gentleman came into the room—"Pray let me "have that delightful letter, ſaid he, "and favour me likewiſe with that "ſigned by Lord Carberry in *propria* "*perſona*." While he was ſpeaking a chaiſe came to the door. "God bleſs "you, my ſweet girl!" ſaid he, taking Arpaſia's hand,——"Wiſh me a good "journey."

"WHERE are you going, my dear "ſir?"

"To London, to London, my love. "Do you think I would add one mo-"ment to the many cheerleſs hours my "poor nephew has ſuffered. Tell me "I may bring him down with me. "Ah! that heavenly ſmile and bluſh ſay

"every

" every thing I can wiſh. Adieu! my " dear friends, I am off."

AND away the good-natured ſoul ſcampered. He quite ran to the chaiſe, and was whiſked off in a minute.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXV.

The Pleaſures of Benevolence.

THE horſes could hardly keep pace with the wiſhes of the excellent Travers, who at the ſame time that he was flying to extract the arrow of affliction from the wounded boſom of his nephew, was determined to indulge the little ſub-acid humour that now and then floated on the ſurface of his heart, in order if poſſible to ſting the vile Lord Carberry, and make him feel a part of the anguiſh he had occaſioned his innocent ſon and the amiable Arpaſia.

SLEEP would have been a ſtranger to his eyes had he laid himſelf on his pillow; therefore he reſted not, but to change horſes, till he arrived in Portman-ſquare. He found Lord Derville very much indiſpoſed, from the apprehenſion that the interpoſition of his friends would only render Arpaſia more rigorous in her rejection of every overture towards an accommodation.

WHEN

WHEN Mr. Travers entered his dreſſing-room, Lord Derville ſeemed almoſt overcome by the ſuddenneſs of his appearance. He could ſcarcely articulate as many words as would conſtitute an enquiry; but, obſerving the diſorder that reigned in the dreſs and figure of his uncle, he preſſed his hand, and expreſſed his fears that his health was affected—"No, no," ſaid he, "I am well enough, "but it has been a ſad wild-gooſe chace "you ſent us on."

"*I* SENT you," anſwered Lord Derville, mournfully, "no—I but too much "feared it would be in vain."

"AND well you might. What ſuc-"ceſs could you expect from a trio, "compoſed of an old man, an old wo-"man, and a brat that cannot ſpeak—"when ſuch a letter as this failed of "gaining Arpaſia? Pray read it, and "tell me how you could ever write "ſuch?"

"I WRITE it?—To Miſs Hanbury? "I never wrote to her in my life. Si-"tuated as we both were, I never could "have had pretenſions to write to her," and unfolding the letter—"This is not

"my writing. My dear uncle, you "know this is not my hand."

"Well, well, ſee if they are your "ſentiments then—that will do as well "for us."

NEVER could aſtoniſhment equal Lord Derville's, nor indeed could any thing equal it, but his horror on the conviction that his father alone, from the baſe motive of ſeparating them for ever, could have fabricated ſo vile a forgery.

"OH! my God! cried he, throwing himſelf on a ſopha, "and could Miſs "Hanbury ever believe me ſo deteſta-"ble a wretch?"

"WHAT was to convince her of "the contrary?" ſaid Mr. Travers,— "What farther proof could ſhe need "than a letter ſigned by your name?"

"AND does ſhe ſtill deem ſo vilely of "me? Oh! how different from the pu-"rity of my love for her, does this "curſed letter ſhew me. Where is the "infamous wretch who has dared to ſet "my name to ſentiments and expreſſions "I could have died before I had ut-"tered?"

"HE

"HE is well known," anſwered Travers, with a ſignificant nod—"Have you "never ſeen the hand before? Are not "theſe T's, theſe F's, and H's very like "a certain old peer who you are obliged "to call father?"

"FORBID it, Heaven! He could not "ſurely be ſo very—very cruel?"

"NAY, it is in the family I'll ſwear—"ſo, if you will not own it yourſelf, "you muſt lay it to him. For my part, "I am ſorry to ſay I ſee the cloven foot "too plainly. I know the print of it "well; and I am ſorry too to ſay, that "I believe him capable of even worſe "things than this."

"WORSE! Oh good God! what can "be worſe? But tell me, my deareſt "uncle, is my adored Arpaſia convinced "that I am not ſo infamous a villain?"

IN few words he related the whole matter to him.—"And now," cried he, "do give me ſome wine and water, for "I have not *drawn bit*, as the ſportſmen "ſay, ſince I parted from the dear girl "herſelf, who I believe was well enough "diſpoſed to think you incapable of be-"ing ſuch a raſcal. I am all impatience

" to viſit my ſweet brother-in-law, and " acknowledge your obligations to him."

" Ask me not to accompany you," ſaid Lord Derville, " I fear I could not " keep in mind that he is my father. I " ſhall not for a long time be able to ſee " him, without venting ſuch reproaches " as would be unbecoming my ſitua- " tion."

" But I ſhall aſk you to accompany " me to-morrow to Hanbury Caſtle. " Can you get your matters ready for " that expedition, think you?"

" If I was as well prepared for Hea- " ven I ſhould be a ſaint. But, my dear " ſir, is it in your credentials to make " me thus happy? May I at the feet of " my ever lovely Arpaſia be allowed to " breathe the honeſt dictates of my " heart?"

" Let her ſee to that—ſhe muſt direct " you when you come there. You need " not con your leſſon. I want to be " gone. I ſhall not make my viſit long " to the amorous peer, though I dare ſay " much longer than he would wiſh. " Order me a bed. I will take a ſlight " repaſt when I return; and whatever

" hour

" hour you chuſe in the morning I will " be ready to attend you to the only girl " in the world that can make you happy, " and I can ſee, with half an eye, that " you alone can make her ſo."

He trotted away on foot to Lord Carberry's, who he diſcovered with his leg wrapped up in flannel, and as ill-natured as diſappointed hopes, and a tormenting miſtreſs (for the Goldfinch was arguing ſome points with him) could render him.

" Your ſervant, your ſervant, my lord. " Ah! this is the comfort of old age— " but we muſt ſubmit to it. I am juſt " come from Hanbury Caſtle. A ſweet " place truly! and the divine lady of it " a ſweet creature. Sorry ſhe was ſo " blind to her own intereſt though, as " not to accept the brilliant offer con- " tained in this letter," handing him over the letter he had written.—" But " ſhe was a perverſe baggage, and here " is another letter too, ſigned Derville. " Perhaps your lordſhip would like to " refreſh your memory with it. Not " that it is unknown to you. Notwith- " ſtanding your ſon little knew to whom

" his obligations were owing.—Here, my " lord, take your letter, and when next " you pen ſo infamous a ſcroll, be kind " enough to add the name of the vileſt of " men, and not proſtitute the honoured " one of Derville to your own ſcanda- " lous compoſitions. Had the lovely " abuſed Arpaſia Hanbury known your " character as well as, from my unhappy " ſiſter's connection with you, I have " been enabled to do, ſhe would not one " moment have been to ſeek for the au- " thor. Be ſatisfied that you are now " thoroughly known and as thoroughly " deſpiſed. Content yourſelf with ſuch " conqueſts and happineſs as theſe " wretches can afford you. As your life " will not, I fear, entitle you to the com- " munion of angels hereafter, ſo you " muſt deſpair of aſſociating with their " counterparts on earth. Farewell. I " hope never to ſee you again. My ſoul " diſclaims all tie with ſo vile, ſo aban- " don'd a relation.

A MAN ſo enveloped in error was not likely to have any feelings of compunction. He curſed the inefficacy of his plans, and his execrations were re-echoed by

by the Goldfinch on his own head. She ſwore ſhe would leave him for ever; and though, but an hour ago he was wiſhing he had never ſeen her, yet he was ſo entangled by her, that he made fifty mean conceſſions to obtain her forgiveneſs; which however was not effected till he had ſacrificed largely at her altar, by preſenting her with 200l. to purchaſe diamonds.

CHAP. LXVI.

Peace Reſtored.

LORD DERVILLE had patience to count the hours till five in the morning, and then tapped gently at the chamber door of his uncle, who in the pleaſure of giving happineſs, forgot the fatigues of the foregoing day, and in a few minutes was ready to join his nephew in the moſt pleaſant journey he ever took. And yet his mind was far from eaſy. He felt the utmoſt inquietude. He feared the ſuſpicions which had been ſo long harboured in the boſom of Arpaſia would leave ſome bitter relics behind—that they were not yet quite done away. His uncle aſſured him, unleſs he was himſelf perfectly clear of his innocence, he would carry him to the devil rather than lead him to the Caſtle. "Arpaſia," ſaid he, "thought "ſhe had the juſteſt cauſe for ſuſpecting "you. She thinks ſo no longer. Truth "has prevailed. And ſhe has ſo much "generoſity of ſoul as to be anxious to "repair the injury her ſuſpicions did "you."

"OH!

"Oh! thank God! ſhe never injured "*me!* I would not have been author of "that letter—no, not to have gained the "point it aimed at! I loved her too well. "What can have equalled my affliction "on finding her ſo reſolutely reject the "ſight of me? But ſhe had juſt cauſe. "Dear, lovely, virtuous girl, how does "my heart adore her, for her noble, her "proper reſentment! Yes, I believe "ſhe is happy in finding how much ſhe "had miſtaken my character." Such was his converſation the whole of the journey, which they finiſhed about ſix in the evening. Mr. Travers would have his own way, ſo he ſtopped the chaiſe before they came to the porter's lodge, walking up a ſide avenue to the Caſtle, they got there before their arrival had been announced. Lady Anne perceived them, but ſaid nothing, as ſhe ſaw a ſign from her brother, which ſhe interpreted into a wiſh not to be diſcovered immediately. She went out to them; and ſaid Arpaſia, with her conſtant companion Auguſta, was gone into the garden; and ſhe believed to the root-houſe, where they had been reading in

the morning, and where they had left a book. She adviſed Lord Derville to follow, which he was equally deſirous of doing, at the ſame time too anxiouſly fearful of alarming his beloved. Lady Anne laughed him into better hopes, and out he ſallied according to her direction.

At the entrance of the root-houſe he ſtopped, his heart beating ſo violently that he was hardly able to proceed, nor was its tumultuous palpitations leſſened by ſeeing his adored Arpaſia careſſing her little Auguſta. She was kiſſing her forehead—"Sweet image," ſhe ſaid, "of "the moſt amiable of men! Can you "teach me what to ſay to him to make "him forget the cruel and injurious ſuſ- "picions my ſoul harboured of him, "and which I have the bliſs to find are "falſe."

"Oh! rather let her teach her happy "father," cried he, "how to expreſs "the hundredth part of the joy he feels "in the conviction of his adored Arpa- "ſia's goodneſs. Pardon me, my deareſt "Miſs Hanbury," he continued, throwing himſelf on his knees before her, ſeeing

ſeeing her turn pale—"pardon my too "abrupt appearance; but how could I "reſiſt the much wiſhed-for opportunity "of ſeeing you—and to hear ſo ſweet "a confeſſion from your heavenly lips. "Oh! how has it repaid my ſufferings."

"INDEED," cried Arpaſia, "your ſud-"den appearance has overpowered me. "Yet believe me, my lord, I ſuffered "too much from the idea of your being "unworthy my eſteem, to wiſh to re-"tract what I ſaid, when I little thought "you, who was ſo much intereſted in "knowing my ſentiments, were ſo very "near me."

HE took her hand, and preſſing it to his lips, thanked her with a look that rendered all language vain. The dear little Auguſta threw her arms round her father's neck who fondly kiſſed her; and ſhe, with the ſweeteſt action, turned to Arpaſia, lifting up her roſy mouth, which ſhe joined to the bluſhing cheek of the lovely maid. Lord Derville in a tranſport folded them both to his enraptured boſom, calling them all that was dear to him in life. Arpaſia till this moment never knew what happineſs really meant. To ſee herſelf the object of the pureſt, tendereſt

tendereſt paſſion of the moſt amiable of men—the man who alone ſhe had ever loved, was a joy almoſt too exquiſite to be ſupported. Tears of true felicity burſt from her eyes, but they were differently conſtrued by Lord Derville—— "Oh! can my Arpaſia ſtill have doubts?" he aſked in a tremulous voice,—"Oh! "hear me, my lovely angel. Doating "on you to diſtraction. Living but in "your ſight, I would not by all the hopes "of my future welfare—I ſwear I would "not have accepted a favour from you, "which ſhould have leſſened that venera- "tion I felt for your virtues. Oh! "could I bear to have loved you leſs "than at this dear moment? Tell, "me, my ſweeteſt Arpaſia, do you "think I could be ſuch a villain? Can "you not ſpeak to me? Tell me then "with your lovely eyes."

ARPASIA, with the utmoſt ſincerity, aſſured him of her perfect confidence in him, and that her happineſs was now compleat. He received theſe aſſurances with the greateſt rapture; and, at her requeſt, they ſet forth for the Caſtle, where they met with the moſt heart-felt con-

congratulations from their ſurrounding friends.

THERE is an analogy between the mind and body which ſhewed itſelf conſpicuouſly in the looks of Arpaſia. At peace with herſelf and the whole world, her beauty ſhone forth with added luſtre. Oh! how happy were now the inhabitants of the Caſtle, and indeed all its environs. For the news ſoon ſpread abroad, and Arpaſia ſo entirely poſſeſſed the hearts of all her dependants, that felicity reigned in every boſom, while hers expanded with delight and thankfulneſs to that merciful Being, who had from the depths of affliction lifted her up to the height of all human happineſs!

How pleaſing were now her contemplations, which had the amiable Lord Derville for their object! All was ſerene and calm. Her days were paſſed in joy, and ſucceeded by nights of ſweet repoſe. She had now only to look forward to a ſeries of content, till the great change came, that would make her and her dearer ſelf amends even for the painful ſeparation!

It was not long before Arpaſia and her faithful lover paid a viſit to the glade —What raptures filled the hearts of the innocent cottagers when they ſaw the amiable and lovely pair, with the ſincereſt bliſs painted in their faces, deſcend from the cabriole—Old Greenwood exclaimed, "I have lived long enough!"

"No no, my good friend," ſaid his lordſhip, ſhaking him by the hand—"You muſt live to ſee me once more "your landlord, when this heavenly "creature bleſſes me with the title of "huſband."

"Let it not be long then, my dear "bleſſed lady," cried the worthy old man—Arpaſia bluſhed, and ſmiling ſaid, there was much to ſettle before that reſumption could be made—But ſhe ſhould never forget the obligation ſhe owed him, who had kindly preſerved her favourite tenants from oppreſſion, when ſhe herſelf was deprived of the means of protecting them.

This ſweet and grateful acknowledgment produced the moſt lively and enraptured return from Lord Derville,

who

who began to think he never ſhould diſcover the whole of her perfections; and indeed, he had ſeen but little of her real character—Now that ſhe was perfectly happy, and conſcious that ſhe might indulge the innocent and laudable propenſities of her heart, her whole frame ſeemed animated with more than mortal privileges—She appeared exalted above human nature, and even all her acquaintance who uſed to think her ſurpaſſing moſt perſons both in beauty of form and accompliſhments of mind, were ſurprized at the improvements they now daily diſcovered.

LADY ANNE would be the ſole directreſs in the moſt material part of the buſineſs, and the moſt anxiouſly wiſhed for by Lord Derville. She argued very properly on the matter, that he might look on himſelf as a diſengaged man from the time of Charlotte's ſeparating herſelf from him.—Her death indeed had been recent; a little more than five months—therefore ſhe would adviſe them to poſtpone their union till Chriſtmas, which would bring it to eight, and to fill up the time between, they would

would go to Bath, and paſs a few weeks —That Arpaſia ſhould be her gueſt during their ſtay, and Lord Derville and her brother by taking a houſe there, might have frequent opportunities of paying them viſits—This was agreed to *nem. con.* and in a fortnight they ſat off, accompanied by Sir James and Lady Hawley, who were too much allied to them by inclination and virtues to ſtay behind.

In that delightful city they paſſed their time with that pleaſing aſſurance which accompanies a mutual confidence, and a ſpeedy proſpect of being united for ever to their kindred mind—And nothing could be more congenial than theirs ſeemed to be—one ſoul, one ſentiment actuated each—All who beheld one, inſtantly diſcovered the exact counterpart in the other.

The ſweet little Auguſta ſeemed a cement between them—Her artleſs fondneſs ſeemed to endear them more to each other, and between them no one could diſcern ſhe made any difference.

The beginning of December, the whole party returned to the caſtle, which

was

was ſo ſoon to hail its new poſſeſſor—Affairs however relative to the marriage, called Lord Derville to town, and at the expreſs deſire of Arpaſia, he diſpoſed of the villa of Sanbury, which had ſtill continued in the ſame ruinous ſtate the conflagration had left it—It was natural for Arpaſia to be partial to her own domain, and Lord Derville had a predilection for a place that had given birth to the woman who alone made up his ſum of bliſs.

ARPASIA promiſed to give up the caſtle for a week, previous to the ceremony, to her good friends Lady Anne and Mr. Travers, conſidering herſelf only as their gueſts—They entered on their office of making preparations with the utmoſt avidity and delight, and indeed their aſſuming the privilege of directors of the revels was a great relief to Arpaſia, who, if ſhe had followed the bent of her own wiſhes, could have conducted every thing with the greateſt privacy and quiet.

THESE good old folks, who however had never entered the pale of matrimo-

ny

ny themſelves, loved ſuch a wedding as this promiſed to be to their hearts, and were reſolved that the general joy ſhould ſpread far and wide; and only regretted the time of year would not admit of a fete cham-petre, by which the whole country might have been preſent, to have enjoyed the jovial ſcene.

On the twentieth of December did the enraptured Lord Derville lead his lovely Arpaſia to the altar, which had been decorated for the purpoſe, as indeed the whole chapel had been, where Mr. Brandon performed the ſervice with little leſs felicity than he had before tied the knot, which had given his daughter to the man of her choice.

What an incenſe of praiſe and bleſſings formed the ſacrifice!—The grateful effuſions of hearts that had been warmed by the benevolence of the charming bride!

Immediately on their return into the ſaloon of the caſtle, the lovely little Auguſta ran to Lady Derville, and throwing herſelf into her arms and called her, her dear, dear mamma; the involuntary

ry

ry tear ſtarted from the eyes of Arpaſia, at this unexpected title from her darling—Lord Derville kiſſed off the precious drop, tho' his gliſtening eye ſpoke the tender emotion of his own heart.

BLEST pair—long may ye live to form each others happineſs, and diffuſe it all around!

IT is needleſs to bring forward the numerous characters of this piece, like the laſt ſcene of a comedy—The vile Lord Carberry met his puniſhment in being deprived of the comfort which would delight a better father, in ſeeing his virtuous and amiable ſon in a ſtate of the utmoſt earthly felicity—He was deprived of the happineſs of having contributed to form theirs; after ſuch a manifeſt breach of the ſocial duties, to hold commerce with him was impoſſible—In the ſurrounding evils that an ill-ſpent life brought on him, he was by his own diabolical machinations deprived of the attendance of a duteous ſon, who would have ſoftened his hours of anguiſh and ſpoken peace to his ſoul.

Now all the companions round his couch were ſuch as himſelf, whom vice had

had debaſed, and who by intereſt alone were bound to him.

WHAT a contraſt between the characters of the father and ſon!—let the obſerving readers make their comments, and be guided which to copy.

FINIS.